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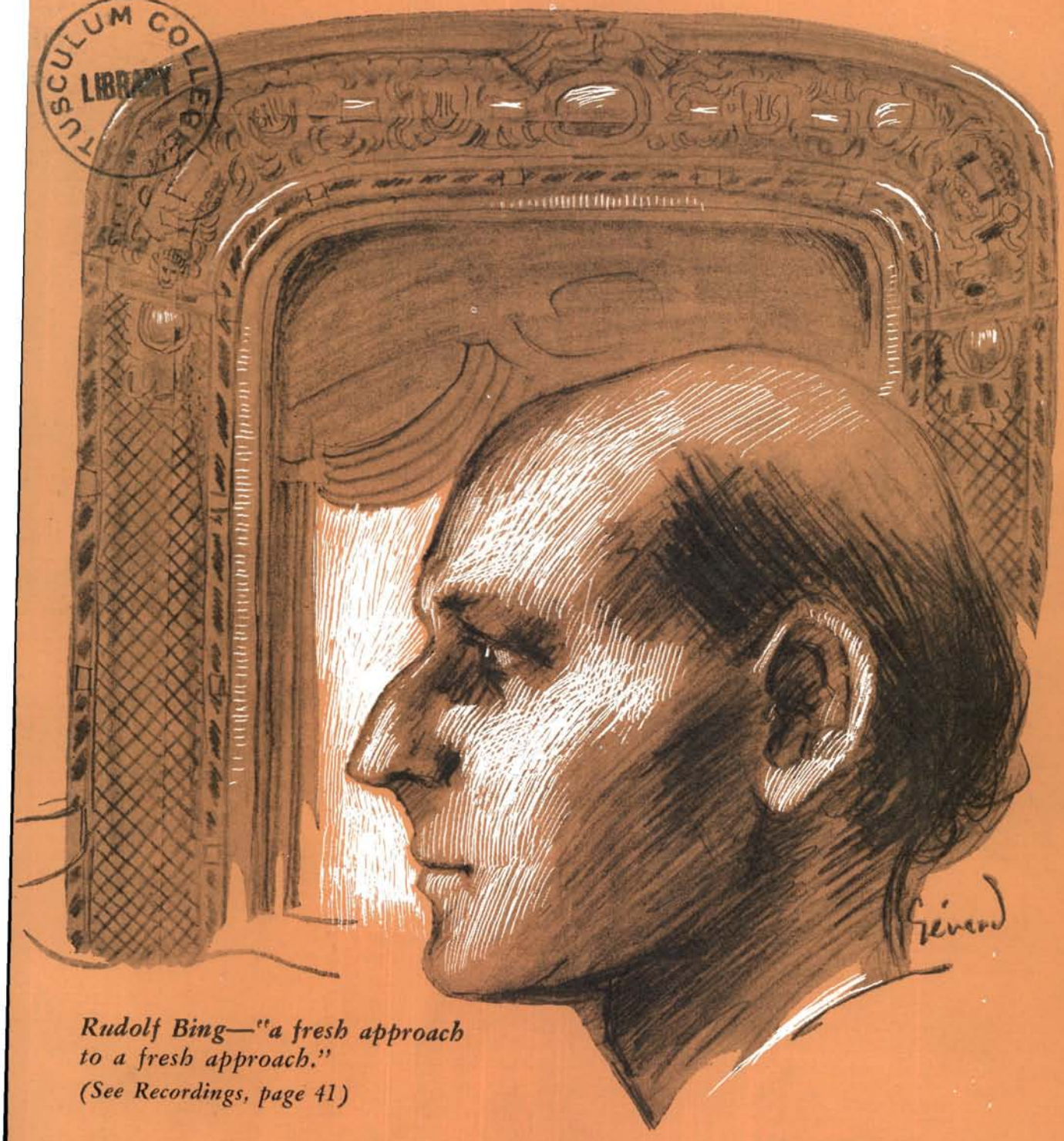

Rudolf Bing—"a fresh approach to a fresh approach."
(See Recordings, page 41)

The Incredible Italians

By P. M. PASINETTI

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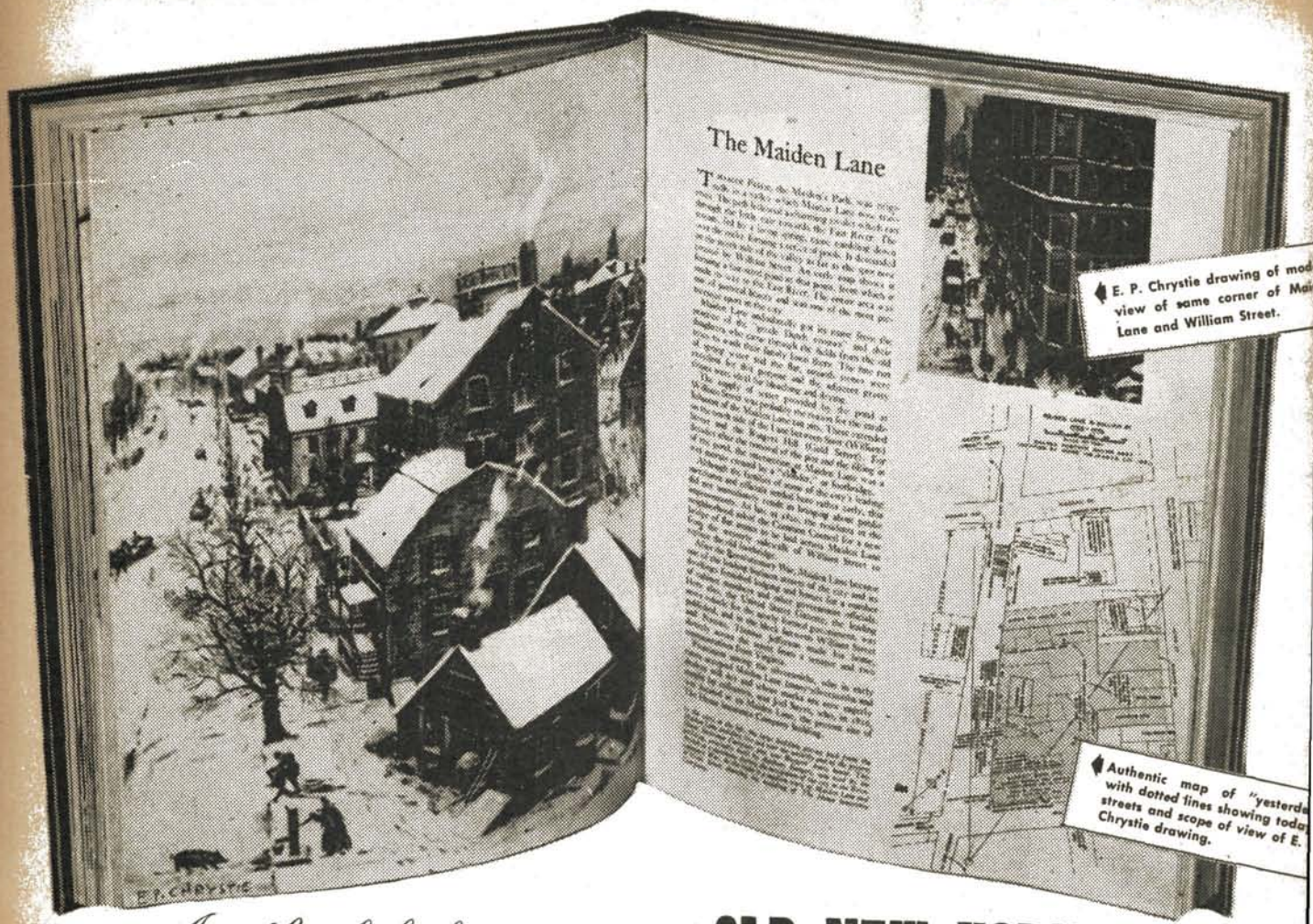
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The Saturday Review

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Cover Drawing of Rudolf Bing by Rolf Gerard, Stage Designer for the Metropolitan Opera Company

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 W. 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y. E. De Golyer, Chairman of the Board; Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Nathan Cohn, Assistant Treasurer and Business Manager; Robert A. Burghardt, Advertising Director; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Ray Goodman, Circulation Manager. Subscription $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U.S. Vol. XXXV, No. 13, March 29, 1952. Re-entered as second class matter January 11, 1952, at the Post Office in New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Good News

▸ West Newbury, Mass., has elected Julian D. Steele as town moderator. Mr. Steele, the only Negro voter in this community of some 1,500 population, was unopposed in the voting at the annual town meeting. Credited by neighbors with elevating the cultural life of the community, Mr. Steele is also responsible for initiating a men's forum in the Congregational Church which has grown so large it now meets in Town Hall.

▸ Six Tampa, Fla., high-school swimmers, on their way to a meet, rescued a Michigan woman and her fifteen-year-old son after their car plunged into a twenty-five-foot canal.

▸ Sunday-school children in Taplow, England, have been contributing their pocket money toward treatments for a Nigerian boy afflicted with leprosy. The boy has now been completely cured.

▸ The Ford Foundation has made a grant of $150,000 to the National 4-H Club Foundation to continue and expand the international farm youth exchange project. The Ford grant will expand this year's program to 135 exchanges of "grass-roots ambassadors" with about forty countries in Europe, the Near and Far East, Latin America, the South Pacific, Asia, and Africa.

▸ A new form of "technical assistance" has been announced by the International Labor Organization. Claude Girard, ILO statistical expert, on mission at New Delhi, assisted in delivering a baby to an Indian woman who had been carrying a load of bricks on her head up a ladder to a construction job. After helping add one more digit to the statistics of India's population, Mr. Girard resumed his normal work at a seminar on labor statistics. The same evening he saw the woman back at work, again carrying bricks on her head up a ladder.

▸ A special Institute for the Rehabilitation of the Blind has been created in Mexico to study legislation and educational programs affecting the blind. Furthermore, the 1952 Federal budget provides more than half a million pesos —some six thousand dollars—to start construction of a school for the blind, equipped with workshops, medical services, a Braille library, a kindergarten, and general social services. The creation of a specialized publishing house for the blind is also being considered.

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TRADE Winds

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BECAUSE THE LOS ANGELES newspaper that is distributed down here in the desert cut its movie coverage yesterday from the usual seven pages to only six (the double headline clear across the top of page one proclaimed "Jane Russell Sustains Black Eye at Las Vegas!") there was room for a tiny item on an inside page to record the death of Norman Douglas, at the age of eighty-three, on his beloved isle of Capri. The author of "South Wind" and a half dozen other distinguished volumes, an accomplished musician, scientist, and one-time high official in the English diplomatic corps, died virtually penniless because he could not and would not conform to conventional standards of morality. In his own words, he "knew too much, and had traveled too far, to be anything but a hopeless unbeliever." As I read the inadequate four-line obituary notice in the Los Angeles paper, my mind carried me back twenty-three years to my one and only meeting with Norman Douglas—and D. H. Lawrence—in Florence, Italy, in the spring of 1929.

DOUGLAS'S "SOUTH WIND" and Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers" were at that time two of the best sellers in our Modern Library Series (they are still important titles on the list today, although their popularity has dimmed considerably over the years) and when I announced my impending visit in notes from Rome, both authors wrote they would be pleased to see me. Accordingly, on the tour up through the Hill Towns, while my companions were looking forward to seeing the Pitti Palace, and the Ponte Vecchio, and the famous doors of the Baptistry in Florence, I was dreaming principally of meeting two of my great heroes in modern literature. Douglas, as a matter of fact, was waiting in the hotel lobby to greet me. Silver-haired, aristocratic, and handsome in the manner of Charles Brackett, the Saratoga producer and bon vivant, Douglas was, moreover, extremely affable and anxious to please, and when he carried me off for dinner and a look at the town, I literally was in seventh heaven.

It soon developed that Norman Douglas was nursing several grievances. One was against the world at large for what he called "its imbecilic attitude" toward homosexuality. Another was against rich American tourists who threw their money away on "fake antiques" but no longer seemed willing to pay fantastic premiums for the limited, autographed editions of inconsequential, slap-dash Norman Douglas trivia that his friend Orioli, among others, was publishing in ever greater profusion. "You've flooded the market," I pointed out. "Collectors of your books are beginning to feel that you're making suckers out of them." "But

D. H. Lawrence and Norman Douglas—"an author's business is to *write.*"

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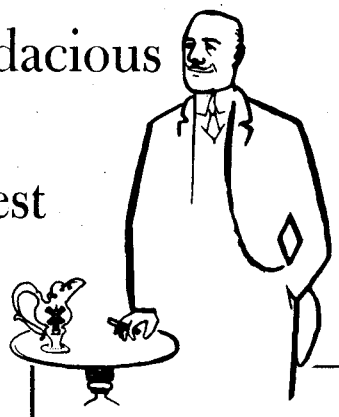

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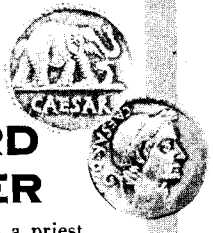

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look at the fortunes they're making overnight in the stock market," pouted Douglas. "What difference does it make to them what they pay for anything?" (What difference, indeed, I reflected some five months later, when the market collapsed, and more than one collector of expensive first editions took a last look at his treasures in a Park Avenue penthouse before leaping over the parapet into eternity.)

BUT MR. DOUGLAS'S BITTEREST vituperation was reserved for the author I was bent upon meeting the next day —D. H. Lawrence. The two men had been firm friends until Lawrence wrote a long preface to a little book

called "Memoirs of the Foreign Legion," by "M.M.," published in London by Martin Secker in 1924. Douglas took umbrage at some of Lawrence's remarks, and the resultant quarrel had been so bitter that the two men had cut each other completely ever since. "At lunch tomorrow I'll draw you a map showing you how to drive out to Lawrence's villa," said Douglas reluctantly, "but you're wasting your time going to see him. He's a hollow shell of the man he once was." Before we parted, Douglas proposed, "Now what sort of a companion shall I provide for you tonight?"

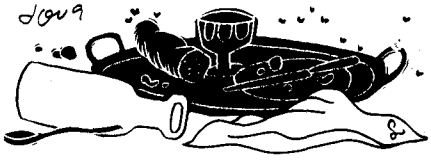
I explained uncomfortably that I had promised to play bridge that evening with some friends from New York. "I could scarcely imagine a more ridiculous way to spend one's first night in Florence," scoffed Douglas—and probably was right.

THE NEXT DAY HE FAILED to produce the map. "It's fifteen miles over vile country roads to Lawrence's villa," he explained, "and none of the taxi drivers in Florence could get you there. I'll have to take you myself." "But I thought you loathed Lawrence?" I remonstrated. "I do," said Douglas, "but after all, he's dying [Lawrence did die, as a matter of fact, less than a year later] and this is probably the last time I'll ever see him." It soon became obvious that Douglas was looking forward to the meeting very much indeed, though throughout our entire ride up through the hills to the Lawrence villa, he expounded on the spectacular misbehavior of Lawrence and his wife, Frieda.

One last turn brought us in sight of our goal. It was a squat, two-story, stucco affair, with a balcony directly above the doorway in the center. Standing on the balcony was a pale, emaciated little man with a flowing red beard—unmistakably D. H. Lawrence in person. At sight of us he waved his arms excitedly, shrilled "Norman Douglas!," and disappeared within the house. A moment later the two authors were embracing warmly, babbling incoherent assurances of affection, and paying no attention whatever to me. Then Frieda—the same Frieda who had been castigated by Douglas five minutes earlier—appeared, and the general rejoicing reached an even higher pitch. It was only when Frieda carried her visitor off for a tour of the grounds that Lawrence addressed his first remark to me. "Mr. Cerf," he said severely, "how dared you bring that man into my house?"

For the next twenty minutes Lawrence recited a list of Douglas's shortcomings that made the latter's own grievances sound petty by comparison. Yet the moment Douglas and Frieda Lawrence reentered the room, the gurgles of joy and the delighted reminiscing began all over again. Those reminiscences! They embraced people and places all over Europe, and in concentrated malice and pettiness sounded, for all the world, like three old gossips cackling together on the verandah of a summer hotel.

AS I SIT WRITING THIS PIECE in the California sunshine, I can still recall every detail of that slovenly room in which we sat. I particularly remember an almost-empty milk bottle lying on its side in the middle of the stone floor, ignored by everybody—and a tray of



half-eaten food gathering flies on a corner table. Bear in mind that this was the home of an invalid in the last throes of tuberculosis! And I remember, too, my sense of shock at the calibre of conversation between two of the greatest and most famous authors of their time. It amply supported the admonition made many years later by Sinclair Lewis (himself fated to die, like Lawrence and Douglas, in Italy): "Authors shouldn't gad about too much, talking and making exhibitions of themselves. That's not their business. The results are usually disastrous. An author's business is to plant himself at his desk—alone—and *write*."

—BENNETT CERF.

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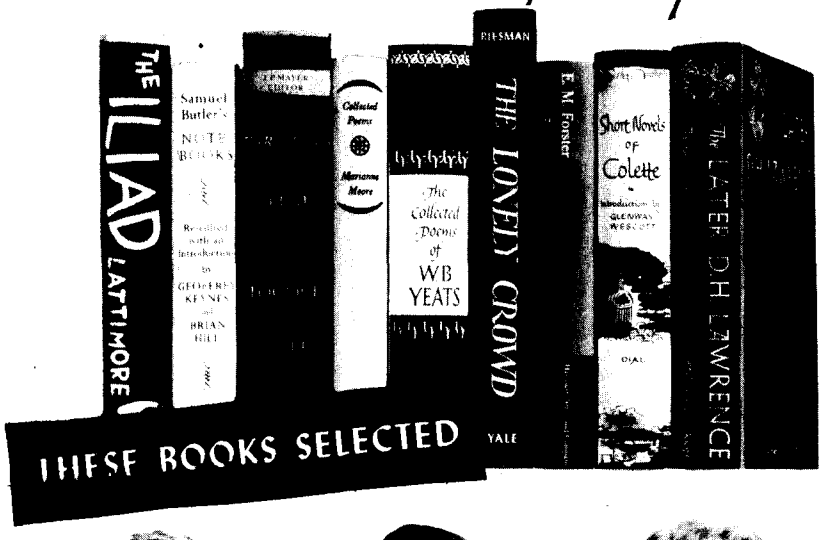

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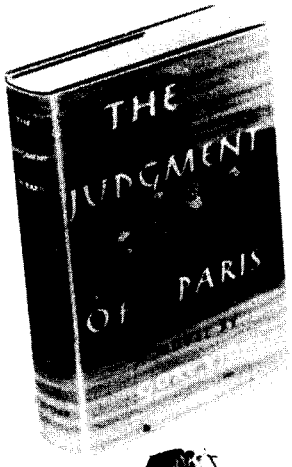

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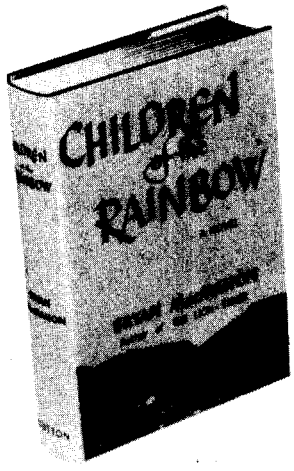

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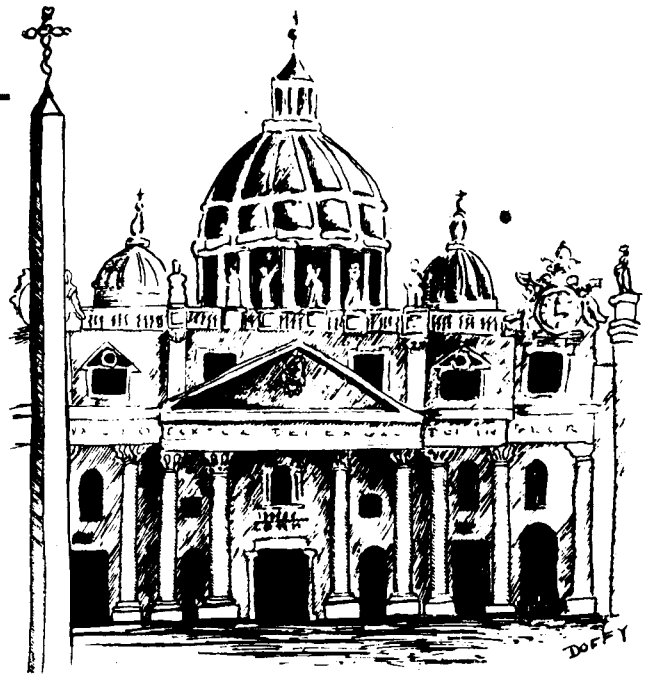
The Saturday Review

MARCH 29, 1952



The Incredible Italians

P. M. PASINETTI

MANY Americans who were in Italy during the war and many who have gone there since have had the impression they were discovering an unknown country. They knew of the proverbial "culture" of Italy but such knowledge in most cases had no concrete human connotations. It has them now.

War brings people brutally in touch with the countries to which it sends them; but along with its infinitely lamentable aspects there are vague positive elements deriving from the fact that war generally leaves time and opportunity only for essential human relationships; thus sometimes it seems to foster a special intensity and integrity of feeling in the very midst of its horror, ravage, and boredom. Speaking of such matters, one is always aware of the grave dangers of sentimentalization: for example, idyllic pictures of G.I.'s and Italians girls have probably been as numerous in fiction and films since the Second World War—and as rich in clichés—as those of soldiers and French nurses were after the First. But there has been more than that; and it seems certain that to some Americans the human contacts and experiences in Italy have been an important catalyzing element in their own self-clarification. Some successful novels, like John Horne Burns's "The Gallery," are cases in point.

Hence also the interest in new Italian literature. A considerable number of Italian novels have been translated into English in recent years. Some outstanding titles are Alberto Moravia's "The Woman of Rome," "Two Adolescents," "Conjugal Love," and "The Conformist"; Riccardo Bacchelli's "The Mill on the Po"; Vasco Pratolini's "A Tale of Poor Lovers" and "A Hero of Our Time"; Giuseppe Berto's "The Sky Is Red" and "The Brigand"; Elio Vittorini's "In Sicily" and "The Twilight of the Elephant"; Ennio Flaiano's "The Short Cut"; Elsa Morante's "House of Liars." Especially when seen from the other side of the Atlantic, and by the writers themselves, all this is simply evidence that English and American critics and publishers have taken cognizance of an Italian literature which until recently they had disregarded. This disregard before the war was due—but in a relatively superficial sense—to the fact that anything that came from a country under totalitarian rule was considered suspect.

Most of the Italian writers who are now well-known in this country and taken to be instances of the postwar revival, like Alberto Moravia, were already recognized in Italy before the war; and while they were trying to manage as well as they could under the exacting circumstances created by civil curtailments, they would probably have welcomed the spiritual support of some sort of American interest. Such support was not then available. On the Italian side, there was considerable, and justified, interest in American literature; the writers who fostered it, like Elio Vittorini, are partly responsible for the present reception of Italian work in America, because, even in a difficult period, full of discomfort and distress, they kept alive a sense of this art which transcended national boundaries. I think this may be a lesson worth keeping in mind when we now wonder about intellectuals "behind the curtain."

IT would be inaccurate to explain the current shift in attitude toward Italy by saying that postwar Italian literature suddenly became relevant and exciting. It is, of course, true that Fascist oppression and conformism had imposed certain taboos on writers and that postwar freedom from restrictions put at their disposal, among other things, certain themes which either politics or "morals" had made untouchable until then—from crooked politicians to characters committing suicide (forbidden in fiction under Fascism), from crying poverty to brothels, etc. Even pity, in a sense, was forbidden during the regime under which everything, as the well-known saying went, was either forbidden or compulsory; and one writer, defining the eternal "Fascist" traits, once desperately said that every form of intelligence was obviously considered "intelligence with the enemy." It is also true that the ferment created by the war and its aftermath offered new and important visions and experiences to writers. But it is not true that such ferments necessarily bring about a resurgence of creativity: literary standards do not depend on the topicality of themes; and, more importantly, they cannot be improvised.

Thus if we turn to actual writing,

P. M. Pasinetti, a native of Venice, now lives in Los Angeles, where he teaches the course in world literature at UCLA. He is himself working on a novel, set in present-day Venice. The article forms part of "New World Writing," published this week by the New American Library.

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Alberto Moravia, Ennio Flaiano, Elsa Morante, Riccardo Bacchelli, Elio Vittorini, Guiseppe Berto—"literature as an art in Italy may be threatened by hand-to-mouth necessities."

again taking the case of Moravia, we may compare his two novelettes published in this country under the title "Two Adolescents" with a story he wrote around 1930 called "A Sick Boy's Winter" ("Inverno di malato"). We cannot fail to realize that the quality and also to a certain extent the themes are similar, and that the older work remains one of Moravia's best. If it had been published in this country at the time it was written it would have passed unnoticed as did two novels by the same author published in an American translation in the Thirties. To give another example, Elio Vittorini's "In Sicily," which was quite widely acclaimed in England and was accompanied in this country by Ernest Hemingway's presentation, was reviewed on the front page of at least one major weekly book review; it had been written and published in Italy before the war. It is a safe bet that if it had been suggested to an American publisher at that time it would not have seemed an interesting investment.

The mechanism of literary success is difficult enough to analyze within one country; it is even more so on the international level. Italian literature has not been prominent on that level for decades, in fact perhaps for centuries; so that the present focusing of attention takes in even work of the past, with the appearance of a popular new version of the "Inferno" by Dorothy Sayers and with serious recognition being given to Alessandro Manzoni's nineteenth-century novel "The Betrothed" in the new Colquhon version. Italian writers of a European caliber, such as Leopardi in the early nineteenth century, never received the success which they certainly deserved; the few serious students of Italian at American universities usually discover them with amazement.

HISTORICALLY the neglect of Italian literature was also due in part to the discouraging provincialism of the writers' atmosphere. In our own century, the last Italian to achieve any recognition before the present revival was Luigi Pirandello—though not for his very valuable, however "provincial," fiction, but for his drama. There is such a thing as a social history of literature, the kind of history that is made in "influential circles," salons, cafés, groups, editorial offices. A young writer finding one of these at his disposal from the start in his own country has, like a boy born into a wealthy family, a considerable advantage; he is recognizable, placeable. Otherwise he has to advance alone, as far as international recognition goes, without support from his native background, eventually perhaps grafting himself onto an already existing cosmopolitan tradition and its facilities. Pirandello's drama availed itself of channels of international success which were, roughly speaking, those that had been opened a few decades earlier by Ibsen. Pirandello, like Ibsen, became very popular in Germany, where the metaphysics of his plays had great appeal; and in Paris, where advanced literary figures still usually received their world baptism. World recognition came to him with the Nobel Prize and with a Hollywood version of one of his plays as a vehicle for Greta Garbo.

Before winning such solemn and safely commercial accolades, Pirandello had been *avant garde*. For instance, his famous play "Six Characters in Search of an Author" had caused violent indignation and controversy, even fist fights; the bourgeoisie of Europe at first had granted him something of a *succès de scandale*. It is important to recall this because such a form of success seems useful, in fact almost necessary at times. In other words, it seems that there must always be spurious elements in the workings of literary fame; the semblance of outrageous novelty, a "scandal" of some sort, or even a successful though perhaps irrelevant slogan or tag applied to a group. Slogans and tags may be vaguely explained to, and even more vaguely understood by, the public, but they help give the idea that a literary event is taking place. They give audiences a point on which to focus their attention, whether it be an attention born of admiration, outrage, or of some sort of magnified gossip. Many people who buy and read the recent French writers would be at a loss to give a workable definition of existentialism, yet it is partly through that inexplicable name that they have been drawn to the writers; it is also typical that some of the writers themselves refuse connection with the movement they are supposed to belong to, or fail to recognize such a movement at all.

Thus the recent "emergence of a new group" of Italian writers and film-makers vaguely tagged as "neorealistic" is quite illusory since those writers and film makers are neither necessarily new nor a group, nor are they in any specialized way "realists"; yet the existence of some tag, however imprecise, helped them to be recognized, to become visible on the international literary scene, whether they were conscious of what was happening to them or not.

On the whole, they were not conscious of it. Italian writers were no longer used, as we have said, to any sort of world success *en masse*. In the eary part of the century the only other Italian writer known internationally besides Pirandello had been Gabriele d'Annunzio, the nature of whose fame had extra-literary connotations, and whose literary example the new Italian writers abhorred. In an important sense, Italian literature, and especially poetry, had been characterized after D'Annunzio by a re-

(*Continued on page* 34)

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Fiction. *There is good news—and sad—for the legions who for a dozen years have been following the exploits of Horatio Hornblower on the high seas of print. Having detailed Horatio's rise from captain to lord in many stirring volumes, C. S. Forester, his creator, backtrailed to account for his midshipman days. Now, with the publication of "Lieutenant Hornblower," reviewed below, his whole career is between covers. . . . It would take a trip around the globe to follow the protagonists of this week's other new novels. Granville Hicks's "There Was a Man in Our Town," a story of one man's attempt to stage a local revolution, is laid in upstate New York. Frederic Morton's "Asphalt and Desire" tells of a Bronx girl's growing pains. Gwyn Thomas's "The World Cannot Hear You" is a chronicle of Welsh miners. And K. B. Montague's "Send the Wise Wind" pictures the lives of philippine tribesmen.*

C. S. Forester—"familiar course."

Mutiny, Murder & Immortality

LIEUTENANT HORNBLOWER. By C. S. Forester. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 306 pp. $3.50.

By HARRISON SMITH

LIKE A. Conan Doyle, W. Somerset Maugham, and A. J. Cronin, Cecil S. Forester studied medicine before he decided to become a writer. Unlike A. Conan Doyle, Forester has never attempted to kill off or abandon the man he had created who had made him famous. Sherlock Holmes was endowed with that quality of immortality which is not granted to human beings, and it is conceivable that Horatio Hornblower, otherwise totally unlike him, shares with him this uncommon attribute; certainly he must be at present better known to tens of thousands of Americans than any living naval officer.

When Mr. Forester finished "Lord Hornblower" two years ago, he may have thought that he had come to the end of him; what more could he do for Hornblower after fifteen years and seven novels than to rid him of his first wife, make him a Commodore and a Lord, and marry him to a beautiful and titled woman? Perhaps it was Forester's medical training that came to the rescue. Hornblower had gone through every vicissitude possible for a man whose naval career began as a midshipman in His Majesty's warships in the days of Napoleon, except to sail under an insane captain. And Captain Sawyer of the *Renown* was alarmingly mad when young Lieutenant Hornblower boarded the ship for a voyage under sealed orders to the West Indies. There he met for the first time Lieutenant William Bush, who was to follow Horatio through most of his later adventures.

Captain Sawyer was driven by the conviction that his officers were conspiring against him and planning mutiny whenever he caught them speaking together. This obsession made him as dangerous to their careers and their necks as the Articles of War he read aloud to the crew which stated that anyone uttering words of sedition or mutiny, or behaving with contempt to his superior officer, might be court-martialed and hanged. In addition, there was no provision in Admiralty rules for paranoia; a captain might be as mad as a March hare, but his word was absolute law.

Mr. Forester adds a murder mystery to young Hornblower's troubles. One stormy night when the officers were truly conspiring together in the depths of the hold, Sawyer summoned the armed marines to search for them. Before they could be found, the Captain was discovered alive but unconscious at the bottom of a hatch. He had fallen or had been pushed, and the reader suspects that either Hornblower or a midshipman who had been persecuted and beaten had a hand in it.

With the Captain abed in a straightjacket, the rest of the novel pursues the course familiar to the readers of any of the Hornblower series. The *Renown* sails into a Spanish harbor and retreats after going aground and receiving a welcome of red-hot cannonballs from the shore. The fort is stormed at dawn, the enemy fleet is put out of commission, and the *Renown* sails with its prisoners and a captured ship to the headquarters of the British West Indian command. There is a mutiny aboard in the middle of the night quelled by Horatio's bravery and seamanship. After the full-dress investigation in Port Royal of the remarkable incidents in the cruise of the *Renown* he is slated for the next command available.

Theoretically this should end the novel. But there is sudden news of a Spanish peace, and Horatio is discovered in a final, absorbing chapter, shipless, hungry, and living in London by gambling with his superiors. Here he betrays all of his familiar resourcefulness, modesty, and that strain of sentimentality, the most endearing characteristic of this indomitable man, which in one of the previous volumes of the saga was to trap him into his marriage to the daughter of a Cockney boardinghouse-keeper. Mr. Forester will never be able to alter the immutable facts of Hornblower's character and career, but he may be able to find neglected incidents for future books. Like A. Conan Doyle, who was forced to keep Holmes alive through popular demand, Mr. Forester must never permit Horatio Hornblower to die.

Clock & Calendar

By Carleton Drewry

THOUGH child and patriarch depend
At different junctures from their tether,
These only, origin and end,
With time to stretch and space to bend,
Tie the long loop of life together.

For what to them is time but
One glance from the self-lidded light.
At one look all the sky goes shut.
With tautening the cord is cut,
And the nerve-ends quick out in night.

Though one be calendared, one clocked,
Time each has touched, time both shall keep
Within a place all space has mocked
Where, ageless, they alike are locked
Close in contemporaneous sleep.

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Body Politic, Etc.

THERE WAS A MAN IN OUR TOWN. By Granville Hicks. New York: Viking Press. 281 pp. $3.

By Charles Lee

NOTHING could be timelier than the subject of Mr. Hicks's new novel: politics. The battleground is a small upstate New York town called Colchester. The central figure is a famous retired sociologist named Ellery Hodder, who is driven by a crusader's zeal to take the town apart "and put it together again—right."

Hodder is "a ball of fire," according to narrator Bert Shattuck, burning with ideas for Colchester's improvement. Colchester, however, refuses to behave like a laboratory. While the professor works, with commendable intensity, to achieve his vision of perfection, the town stubbornly insists on being itself. It answers rational academics with irrational realities. It educates the educator; it gives the man of books a glimpse into the bewildering substance of which they are only a part, namely, life; it suggests that the man who would do good has to learn at the same time to do well.

There is nothing strikingly new in Mr. Hicks's political lesson in the importance of the means to the ends, and if that were all that his novel offered, the heavy hand of thesis would make it dreary, though earnest, going. Fortunately, the town that educates outsider Ellery Hodder also entertains the reader. Bert Shattuck is a perceptive and sometimes sardonic observer. He has the advantage of being an insider, a member of the town's leading clan; he knows the ins and outs, the ups and downs, the intricate social webbing of the community, past and present; he knows that everything in the town, including politics, is people.

The Colchester that he summons up on the page has its good side and its bad. Bert neither sentimentalizes nor debunks. As he details Colchester's births, deaths, marriages, murders, romances, illnesses, quarrels, social doings, scandals, and feuds, a community emerges that resembles many others but—and this is his main point—differs in such complex ways as to remain unique.

Some of the inhabitants are stupid, some wicked, some good, but all of them, in the word of Ada Rennick, are interesting. Uncle Gary Shattuck, a magisterial fool, provides sexual humor; Jerry Shattuck inflicts and invites violence; Paul Strang, living on the wooded fringe of town, is involved

—Charles Hammer, Jr.

Granville Hicks—"happy effect."

in mystery: Mike Ryan and his feeble-minded giant of a son, Lew, touch on the heart of tragedy; Will Shattuck, white-haired and paternal, leader of the entrenched Republican machine, understands the roots of power; Miles Bennett, his stallion son-in-law, scandalizes and delights the town by having an affair with the married daughter of the man opposing him for the job of road superintendent in the local election.

These are just a few of the actors in Mr. Hicks's complicated chronicle. It ought to be observed that they cross and crisscross one another's paths with all the structural smoothness of a "well-made" French play. Some of the drama is lost by reason of Mr. Hicks's telling his story in the first person; important actions happen offstage and are reported, sometimes too low metabolically, in Bert's urbanely detached role of "inside" commentator and spectator. But the net effect is a happy one; the reader notes both the forest and the trees, people individually and communally, the earthy methodology as well as the lofty objectives of politics. Mr. Hicks's novel is not only entertaining; it is also intelligent and useful.

—Glidden

Frederic Morton—"powerful elements."

Victims of Life

ASPHALT AND DESIRE. By Frederic Morton. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 282 pp. $3.

By Robert Halsband

THE story of "Asphalt and Desire" is related in the first person by Iris Leavis, who is being graduated from New York City's Hunter College. In the five days that follow we stay with her as she batters her way through her family and home in the Bronx, through adventures as a job- and man-hunter, and through a love affair that leads to her maturity at the end of the book.

The most powerful elements in the novel are Iris, her family, and their home. She is a heller who is aware of being possessed by a burning vitality which expresses itself in brutal thought and gesture. As the product of "four gulped-down years" in the "world's largest academic fact factory for women" she has emerged with a tough outer crust and—whether or not her fictional creator intended it—an almost hollow center. The crust is skilfully made visible for us with all its glitter of wise-cracks and witticisms, its smart-aleck lingo; we also see that her human sentimentality has been inverted into bitter cynicism. What produced this phenomenal girl becomes clearer when we observe her family and home. Her mother is a harridan, growing old gracelessly, her father a pathetically beaten victim of life and wife, and her brother a rebellious screwball. The scenes of their squalid battles is presented with such sustained tension and expressionistic distortion that they are as vivid as a nightmare, and almost as intolerable. They are like "Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl" some years later and some miles uptown.

All the urban scenes, in fact, are beautifully pinned down. Although the locales are as definite as a guidebook, they are as subjective as the heroine sees them. The dusty squalor of Morris Avenue and 174th Street, where her family lives, the asphalt elegance of Fifth Avenue, the sordid saloons of Yorkville, and the factory atmosphere of Hunter College (ironically in the center of the silk-stocking district)—we see them all through the perspective of Iris's point of view. Her account of her college education is not objective, either, but it is a valid one dramatically.

With a main character and a milieu so successfully set forth the novel is still a failure for two basic reasons. The plot which is woven around Iris

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during the five days is completely fustian. Her romantic man, Egon Biml, is, with all his two-dimensional handsomeness, right out of a shaving advertisement; and their final adventure in a New Jersey adult camp ends in cinematic fashion with passion, flight, pursuit, and reconciliation. None of it has the ring of conviction that Iris and her family so resoundingly have as characters. The other flaw is that the story of Iris is obviously intended as a sort of *entwicklungsroman*, that is, a "growing-up story" of her growth to maturity. From the innocent brashness of a college student to—where does she end? She makes her peace, on the last page, by accepting her universe of mediocrity: "I thought how comfortable life had become now that it had shrunk. I thought of that, it was a good, cool thought." Given a personality like Iris's, even after her shock in losing her virginity and finding her man, we are not convinced that this is her maturation. It is a forced, and therefore a false, resolution of the story.

Humor but No Green Valleys

THE WORLD CANNOT HEAR YOU. By Gwyn Thomas. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 288 pp. $3.

By Walter Havighurst

THE steep valleys of Wales have seen many somber seasons, since the defeat of the native Celtic peoples at the dawn of English history, and none more somber than the years of depression a generation ago. This is the time and place of Mr. Thomas's novel, but the somberness is all but forgotten in the wild and headlong folklore of his villagers. "The World Cannot Hear You" is a depression story, told with wonderful zest and astringent comedy. It shows men living on the bare ration of the dole with lusty comradeship and defiant humor.

Meadow Prospect is the fair name of their valley, but except for the beauty streaming down from the hills there is nothing fair about the basin of dead mines and dead mills; "Meadow Prospect," says one of its sardonic citizens, "is the Kooh-i-Noor in the crown of world depression." Yet the boys are far from overwhelmed. They argue tirelessly in Orlando's Chip and Coffee Bar, they sing like archangels in the Orphean Society, and they clump periodically to the meetings of the Library and Institute for soaring discussions of every subject under the sun.

Through all the meetings, the gossip, the passionate dispute and speculation, runs the persistent thread of a story—the tale of simple, homely, big-hearted Omri Hemlock and of the shrewd, unscrupulous Picton Gethin. Omri has as many troubles as Job—his wife runs off with a house painter, his horse falls dead halfway across a furrow, a mountain torrent ravishes his potato field and sweeps away his house—but he survives with an untroubled spirit. Meanwhile the avid Picton progresses steadily from peddling vegetables to a prosperous potato crisp business.

The only time gentle Omri grew agitated was when he heard Delphine Stringer playing the piano in the Three Star Mission; he was quite dazzled by her. But again the rascal Picton got ahead of him. Still Omri lived to see Picton mortally felled by an icicle, which dropped like a sword from heaven when he furiously kicked at the frozen door of his warehouse. Then one of the philosophical comrades observed that there is undoubtedly a look of inscrutable fitness on the stupid face of life.

Every page of this village comedy is enlivened with the fantasy and fierce humor of the grubby, passionate people of Meadow Prospect. And in the center is the memorable Omri, "great listener, great smiler, who could stand equally delighted at the sight of a moving cloud, a flight of birds, a roll of grassland, or the twitch of yearning on some defeated face." Part of the uniqueness of this novel comes from the presence of tenderness in the midst of daftness and derision.

East Meets West

SEND THE WISE WIND. By Kate Bigelow Montague. New York: John Day Co. 247 pp. $3.

By Benjamin Appel

KATE Bigelow Montague lived in the mountains of northern Luzon for five years. Her husband was the resident manager of the Balatoc Mines near Baguio, the summer capital of the Philippines, where the officialdom and wealthy of Manila go to escape the heat. Baguio was, and is today, a city of the twentieth century with electricity, gasoline stations, and luxuries imported from the States. But in the nearby mountains there are people whose roots still go back strong and vital to the long centuries before the white man set foot in the Philippines, or in Asia. These mountain people are the Igorots.

Mrs. Montague's novel "Send the Wise Wind" reveals that the author was intensely curious about the "unsophisticates," the Igorots, who lived in their villages near sophisticated Baguio. In her five years in northern Luzon she got to know them; she attended their ceremonies, their weddings, and burials. They were sun worshipers unlike most Filipinos in Luzon, who are Catholics, depending upon rice for their staple food. In bygone days they had built magnificent rice terraces in the mountain walls, mined for gold; in war they had hacked off the heads of enemies slain in battle In the Thirties, when Mrs. Montague knew them, the Igorots had long given up their custom of beheading, although many "Old Filipino Hands" were still writing letters home about this "savage" Igorot custom. To Mrs. Montague, far more discerning, the custom of beheading was simply a single detail of war-making, one detail in the intricate mosaic of the Igorot culture.

In her novel she writes of the peak point of this culture before the missionaries had trekked into the rugged mountains—before the young Igorots had signed up for work in the gold mines or, squatting on their haunches, began to carve souvenirs for the tourist trade. She writes of the long-ago past. The Spaniards have already conquered the plain dwellers of Central Luzon, bringing the West to the antique islands off the China Coast. Her book opens with a description of the newcomers. A wandering Igorot, Damsang, returning to the impregnable mountain tells of men with "sharp high noses, with gold in their teeth and hair growing on their faces." They

(*Continued on page* 30)

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Belles-Lettres.

Few writers have been so written about during their lifetime as GBS, and now that he has taken his place among the departed great the flow of Shaviana is surging rather than abating. If the Shaw shelf in personal libraries is not going to become unmanageable some weeding out of books already there is clearly in order. Jacques Barzun suggests one new volume that may well replace many old ones in his review below. . . . A dozen years ago John Masefield published his autobiographical "In the Mill." Now he is supplementing it with a new volume about his kindling years, "So Long to Learn" (*page* 17). . . . *A compass is a necessity when trying to find one's way through an area still largely uncharted.* The New York Time*'s Orville Prescott has just published a little volume that should serve as compass and guide to the modern novel* (*"In My Opinion," page* 17).

Shavianism in a Classic Light

BERNARD SHAW. By A. C. Ward. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 215 *pp.* $1.85.

BERNARD SHAW: A Chronicle. By E. F. Rattray. New York: Roy Publishers. 347 *pp.* $5.

By Jacques Barzun

TWO new books on Shaw may seem a surfeit of good things after the output of recent years. Have we not "G. B. S. 90," Hesketh Pearson in various formats, Desmond McCarthy in slim theatrical trim, and Eric Bentley the concise and pleasantly combative biographer-critic? The answer is that perhaps we should push off the shelf everything but Mr. Bentley and make room at least for these two equally compact additions. We might even leave a bit of space for a volume that has never appeared in English though it has long enlightened German readers. I refer to Julius Bab's study of the master, already forty years in the past.

The great merit of Mr. Ward's fresh study is that it is the first book able to treat Shaw as a classic. Shaw is dead and this fact, paradoxically, makes us unable any longer to reject him at will. If he is to be rejected at all it must be after due consideration. He is like a monument recently put up on a public square. Those who are not disposed to linger and admire must nevertheless walk around him. Mr. Ward is of course an admirer, even though he cannot be said to linger in any of his rapid and efficient chapters. He takes for granted a certain knowledge of the canon, and without referring to the literature of previous criticism he asserts as beyond cavil a quantity of truths about Shaw: his deep seriousness, his moral integrity, and his artistic powers. These are what make the classic. And for the first time the burden of proof is shifted. Anyone who disbelieves must show cause.

To this refreshing attitude, Mr. Ward adds the testimony of a contemporary who saw the changes brought about by Shaw's influence during the last half century. He thereby rids criticism of the recurrent illusion that great men merely reflect what is latent in everybody's mind. The mirroring of some existing or preceding truths is undoubtedly a fact, but the energy, the fighting, writing, and iteration needed to bring any large group of men to say "we knew it all the time" proves conclusively that they didn't.

Finally, Mr. Ward disposes of the notion—which is Hesketh Pearson's obsessive error—that Shaw lacked sympathy with what are loosely called "human" traits—the simple, small, commonplace variations of ordinary character. In a brilliant analysis of "The Doctor's Dilemma" (among other plays) Mr. Ward demonstrates beyond argument that Shaw at his best makes lovable the very people he is refuting or satirizing or animating with his own ideas. The best scene in his play which is presumably "against" doctors is that in which five different sorts of physicians sit and talk and display their amiable diversities. They also propel the action which will shortly become moral drama, and they certainly leave the reader or beholder convinced that he has been given individualized types. Once this has been pointed out, it would seem impossible to parrot the old charges that Shaw dealt only with ideas, that his plays are all talk, and that his passion for propaganda blinded him to the realities of human life.

Mr. Ward rightly concludes that Shaw's genius consists precisely in having put on the stage people with minds, on the daring assumption that such people also exist outside the theatre.

What Mr. Rattray contributes in his chronicle is a handbook indispensable to an understanding of Shaw's career as distinguished from his achievement, that is to say, a selective but steadily chronological account of what Shaw did and wrote and participated in from the mid-Seventies till his death. Mr. Rattray had published a volume so conceived in 1934, which the present edition brings up to date.

The author of such a work is naturally sympathetic to its subject; it took patience and knowledge and Shavian judgment to follow the innumerable newspaper controversies, reports of meetings and speeches, and critical publications, as well as to verify dates and collate versions of lesser or greater works. Mr. Rattray's matter-of-fact style reflects his conscientious mind, and he achieves his effects by the undersigned juxtaposition of the facts produced by his research. It is evocative of a vanished though recent past to learn that Shaw battled with Ernest Newman over Richard Strauss in 1910, just as it is staggering to discover that the stuff of the tremendous Scene in Hell of "Man and Superman" — perhaps the greatest moral utterance of the first half of our century—existed as a shapeless nugget in the tale "Don Giovanni Explains," which is dated 1887. For these and other enlightening surprises, and not merely as a work of reference, Mr. Rattray's book deserves a permanent place on that sifted-over shelf I spoke of—all Shaw plus a handful of exegetes.

Jacques Barzun, professor of history at Columbia University, is the author of "Darwin, Marx, Wagner," "Berloiz and the Romantic Century," and other books.

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An Intellectual Odyssey

SO LONG TO LEARN. By John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Co. 181 pp. $3.

By Louis Simpson

JOHN MASEFIELD, Poet Laureate of England, is one of the few Grand Old Men who still grace the English literary scene. Mr. Masefield, white-haired, trim, regards the far distance from the book-jacket as though scanning the seas he sailed as a youth. There is integrity in his stance, and, one suspects, a certain contempt for changes of the weather. Reading in "So Long to Learn," the story of his apprenticeship in art, one comes to understand that the man and his appearance are not divided. So it was with Thomas Hardy and Bernard Shaw; so it is today with Mr. Masefield and his fellow sailor, H. M. Tomlinson. For them literature is life.

Mr. Masefield is perhaps best known as a poet for his "Salt-Water Ballads," "The Everlasting Mercy," and "Reynard the Fox;" as a writer of prose for his "Gallipoli" or the novel "Dead Ned." His play "Tragedy of Nan" has been successfully performed on both sides of the Atlantic. In all, his works number some sixty odd. To these desk labors must be added years spent in bringing poetry to the public, by the organizing of competitive recitals. Between the boyhood in which he had intimations of immortality, and the young manhood in which he began to practise his art, there were years of vigorous and often painful experience before the mast. In this interlude, also, he suffered from the loss of the imagining faculty which had delighted his childhood. This was, for the poet, a time of doubt and depression. Americans may be flattered to learn of the circumstances in which he recovered himself:

"I was in New York City, in summer time, when I suddenly found that the faculty of mental story-telling had returned to me. . . . I was walking in an uptown part of the East Side when a story suddenly became bright in my mind, in the way that I had known of old . . . This resurrection of my inner life was a gladness. New York City in herself was a gladness, that romantic, beautiful, exciting city, the Queen of all romantic cities, with such sparkle in her air and in her people."

"So Long to Learn" is, for the most part, the record of his creative childhood and manhood. In Herefordshire the child escaped from the ever-watchful and misunderstanding adults to wander in meadows; to stand on the old docks of Ledbury where coal, scattered by vanished sailors, was overgrown with grass, to follow the old canals; to read the talented verses in the churchyard. Then, too, he obtained ghost stories and stories of violent happenings, which inflamed his mind. Like Wordsworth, he was haunted by the sounding cataract, but Masefield's existed in a dream country he had never seen:

"I knew also that it was dangerous to go into land above the fall, because there I might be hunted by people who used dogs, or by dogs without the people." A strange anticipation!

The care with which the later poet turned his couplets, the aggressively strong health of the ballads (". . . the bloody fun of it is, they're drowned!") and the sentimentality which was to be labeled and accused by later generations, were, we may surmise, in part undertaken to exorcise childhood terrors.

The reader of more recent poetry will scarcely accept the strong critical opinions of Mr. Masefield. It is the author's privilege to express a devotion to the painting and literature of William Morris and Rossetti; but, to include the varieties of present-day art in the term modern, and to define the modern as marring of walls and searching in gutters, is almost peevish. "Modern" critical methods, with all their faults, have at least taught us to take the work of art on its own terms, before taking it on our own. E. M. Forster once remarked of Joseph Conrad that he had no creed, only opinions, "and the right to throw them overboard when facts make them look absurd." The point seems to be applicable here. Is this a characteristic of Grand Old Men?

Not the least informative pages of this chronicle are those concerning William Butler Yeats. Here is a portrait of the poet as a young man, and a view of the room in which he held his famous Monday Evenings. Mr. Masefield, with his lively interest in the theatre, and in folk story telling, is also able to give us a real sense of the personal force of John Synge, and his mission as a folk artist. Tributes to literary greatness are common enough, but some men even in praising seem to suggest that they are superior to the dead. Mr. Masefield speaks of the great as living presences, and is, therefore, in their company.

Louis Simpson is the author of "Arrivistes Poems, 1940-1948."

Orville Prescott—"flair for phrase-making."

Canons of Criticism

IN MY OPINION. An Inquiry Into the Contemporary Novel. By Orville Prescott. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 259 pp. $3.

By Maxwell Geismar

THE TITLE and subtitle of Mr. Prescott's book are quite correct. He has written a straightforward account of the books and authors he has liked or disliked during the last decade, from the vantage point of the daily book reviewer for *The New York Times*. He has asked certain questions about prevailing trends in modern fiction without really answering them. This is on the whole fortunate, I think, since Mr. Prescott's primary function —and his first impulse—is to be open and receptive to all kinds of books.

What I missed in the opening sections of the present study—on the "squandered talents" of Sinclair Lewis, John Steinbeck, and Ernest Hemingway—was something of Mr. Prescott's usual zest, verve, and flair for phrase-making. He is probably too solemn about Thomas Mann and William Faulkner among the circles of the "eminently obscure" whom he knows he should like even when he doesn't. He prefers Willard Motley to Richard Wright (which is dubious) and the young novelist Maritta Wolff to either of them, which is, in *my* opinion, wrong.

Mr. Prescott is sound in his belief that the social and political ideas of

Maxwell Geismar is the author of "Writers in Crisis" and "The Last of the Provincials," part of a long critical study of the novel in America.

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a novelist, however admirable, have nothing necessarily to do with the final achievement of his craft, as in the case of George Orwell or Arthur Koestler. But he tends to take the assertions of the ex-Communists too seriously (in the discussion of the political novels of the 1940's) that they, as Koestler said, "are the only people on your side who know what it is all about." Are they? And whose side? Perhaps the defense of democratic values is too important to be left in the hands of those writers who still regard them as a second choice, or necessary evil.

"In My Opinion" really comes to life, however, in its discussion of the "Comrades of the Coterie." Mr. Prescott is more relaxed here, often entertaining and sharp in his judgments of English writers like Henry Green or those characters in Ivy Compton-Burnett who all talk with the polysyllabic majesty of Samuel Johnson. "Brutally frank and nakedly inhibited, wise with the brittle wisdom of cynicism and the weary wisdom of suffering," Mr. Prescott says about Miss Compton-Burnett's satire — "it makes for exhausting reading." Though stressing the issue of sexual inversion and moral decadence somewhat strongly, he is essentially right, too, on the younger (and even more brittle) American counterparts— Capote, Bowles, Buechner—of the coterie writers.

Tennessee Williams, who is the most serious figure in this group, comes in for less attention than he deserves, and almost invariably Mr. Prescott is sharper and more illuminating on writers who are not of major stature. But where I must confess he completely surprised me—and broke all his own implicit canons of good taste—was in his spirited defense of both Norman Mailer's "The Naked and the Dead" and James Jones's "From Here to Eternity." Against the background of all the new novels mentioned here, these two books are still among the best we have had—and it is much to Mr. Prescott's credit that he felt and accepted their power. In his *Times* column he even defended their purpose—if not always their expression—against the imaginary strictures of that horrible female—the young American girl—also imaginary, and represented as usual by an irate father.

Mr. Prescott likes John Hersey's "The Wall"; he omits William Styron's "Lie Down in Darkness." There is a good section on James Gould Cozzens and an appreciative account of Joyce Cary—who has, incidentally, refuted the truisms that Mr. Prescott still quotes about the "ponderous

(*Continued on page* 32)

Music. *Only within the last century have composers of music bothered to write books about the problems of their art and craft. Richard Wagner set the style, and his eight volumes of collected prose works are still unsurpassed—at least in bulk. In the intervening years many other composers have set down their thoughts about music between the covers of books. The latest is Paul Hindemith's "A Composer's World"* (*see page* 19), *which our reviewer calls "a unique contribution." An excerpt from it was published in* SR *Dec. 29. One of the matters with which Hindemith deals is the power of music to convey specific emotional or intellectual content. This is the burden also of Sidney Finkelstein's "How Music Expresses Ideas"* (*page* 21), *a Marxist analysis. . . . Gilbert and Sullivan fans will not want to miss the two volumes reviewed below; for the ragtime to be-bop contingent, the same applies to Barry Ulanov's "A History of Jazz in America"* (*page* 20)

Collaborators in Strange Potpourri

THE GILBERT AND SULLIVAN BOOK. By Leslie Baily. New York: British Book Center. 443 *pp.* $9.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN: His Life, Letters, and Diaries. By Herbert Sullivan and Newman Flower. New York: British Book Center. 306 *pp.* $3.

By Newman Levy

LESLIE BAILY'S "The Gilbert and Sullivan Book" is well named This is not just another book about Gilbert and Sullivan; it is—and of this there is no possible doubt whatever—*the* Gilbert and Sullivan book. It contains everything that the most devoted Savoyard can want. There are detailed, authoritative biographies, histories of the operettas, their origins and productions. There is entertaining social background, contemporary reviews and criticisms. And there is an abundance of delightful anecdote.

With all this there are ten beautiful color plates (including costume and scenic designs), and four hundred black-and-white reproductions including photographs, drawings, and facsimiles of letters, music scores, programs, and press clippings.

"This book," Mr. Baily tells us, "has grown out of a series of radio programs, first broadcast by the BBC and since repeated in many parts of the world, telling the story of the partnership of Sir William S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan. As author of the radio-biography I was fortunate to obtain access to sources of documentary evidence—diaries, letters, notebooks, etc.—which had never been systematically and thoroughly examined and compared."

If you are interested in studying the creative process in action you will find a detailed account of the development of "Iolanthe" from its genesis, through its variations in W. S. Gilbert's "plot book," through its rehearsals, including the text of lyrics that were dropped out of the show, and a facsimile of pages from Gilbert's prompt book, down through the opening performance and the rave reviews the next day.

If you want to know about the banning of "The Mikado" by the Lord Chamberlain in 1907, together with Gilbert's acrid comments on censorship, you can read about it here. Also Mr. Gilbert's equally pungent remarks in defense of the censorship of plays before the Joint Parliamentary Committee in 1909.

You can read the details of Sullivan's discovery of the lost Schubert symphonies; of the production in Hollywood of the motion picture version of "The Mikado," with Martyn Green

Newman Levy, a devoted Savoyard, is author of "Opera Guyed" and other light volumes.

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and Kenny Baker; of the "Swing Mikado" produced during the early days of the New Deal by the Federal Theatre; of the "Hot Mikado" with Bojangles" Bill Robinson; and a "Jazz Mikado" in Berlin—they are all in this encyclopedic book.

Here, too, you will find for the first time the details of the celebrated Carpet Quarrel that broke up the immortal partnership and landed the Gilbert-Sullivan-D'Oyly Carte triumvirate in the law courts. Mr. Baily exhumed the story from the dust-covered correspondence files of the D'Oyly Carte Company. And you can read about their reconciliation several years later, the production of "Utopia, Limited," and the text of Bernard Shaw's review of it.

There is a wealth of anecdotal illustration in the book and from it neither of the great collaborators emerges in a particularly favorable light. Poor Sullivan, who was a talented Victorian snob, was miserable throughout his life because he believed he was wasting his genius upon the light music that was destined to give him immortality. He was encouraged in this belief by all his friends from Queen Victoria down.

Gilbert, regardless of his great talent, was a bad-tempered, bad-mannered man. It has always seemed to this reviewer that Sullivan's genius was by far the greater, and it was therefore gratifying to have that opinion endorsed by no less an authority than Bernard Shaw, who said, "We compare the score of 'The Mikado' today not with the score of 'Les Brigands' and 'La Grand Duchess' but with that of 'Die Meistersinger.' . . . Sullivan has been gaining ground and Gilbert losing it since they died."

Much has been written about Gilbert's brilliant repartee, his spontaneous wit. Mr. Baily gives many examples, and it would seem that either the examples were not happily chosen or the reputation was overrated.

There is a regrettable omission. "The puritan of the Savoy [Gilbert]", Mr. Baily says, "had in private conversation a Rabelasian quality which has kept some of his best mots from printed record." A few well-chosen mots might have made this invaluable book even more priceless.

"Sir Arthur Sullivan, His Life, Letters and Diaries" is a revised edition of an excellent biography written in 1927 by Newman Flower, a well-known musicologist, and Herbert Sullivan, Sir Arthur's favorite nephew. It is an interesting sidelight on Victorian, or family, reticence that though Mr. Baily tells about Sullivan's youthful love affair with Miss Rachel Scott Russell the nephew never mentions her.

Art & Attitudes: A Point of View

A COMPOSER'S WORLD. By Paul Hindemith. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 221 *pp.* $3.75.

By Howard Hanson

PAUL HINDEMITH'S explorations in the world of a composer stand out as a unique contribution to the great mass of literature which has been pouring from the presses on the subject of the creative arts in general and music in particular. It is unique first because its author is eminently qualified to speak with authority. He is no ivory-tower inhabitant looking down from a great height upon the world of composers, performers, educators, music-listeners, impresarios, and music businessmen; for he is not only a distinguished composer, but a practical man of music, a performer, teacher, and theoretician who understands the impact of music upon the world of men and the impact of the world of men upon music and musicians. It is unique also in that it can be read—with perhaps the exception of the portion directed to tuning and scale temperament—by musicians and laymen with equal profit. If the book is uneven in value, and if the final chapters do not live up to the splendid beginning, it proves only that the author is human with human frailties and prejudices.

Since Mr. Hindemith is first of all a composer, it is not strange that the sections which have to do with the creative art itself are the most provocative. His analysis of the varying philosophical attitudes toward music, music as moral power, music as scientific organization, music as entertainment, is both brilliant and sound, and exhibits a breadth of sympathy and understanding which is not too frequently found in strongly creative personalities. His plea that the composer develop an understanding of the organization of sound is thrice welcome in these chaotic times as is also the expression of the hope that some day our musical scientists and scholars will turn their attention to the difficult problems of emotional reaction to music, instead of "collecting more data about music (almost exclusively music of the past at that!)"—a sly dig at our musicologists. His diatribe against the glib assertion that music is a "universal language" is sound psychology and anthropology and impresses us once again with the fact that we have only the most meager knowledge of the effects of music upon the listener. On the other hand, his assertion that the composer "does not express his own feelings in his music" can hardly be taken as inspired gospel. It is undoubtedly true of some composers both of the past and present. It seems equally untrue of others. Here again the art-science of music needs the service of the psychologist and the psychiatrist.

Paul Hindemith—"practical man of music."

The brief chapter on education offers some observations which will be readily accepted but—so far as American musical education is concerned—seems to be a quarter to a half century out of date. Greater use of the facilities of modern transportation, such as the automobile, the iron horse, or the iron bird, would have rendered this chapter more accurate and more informative.

The sections of the book devoted to the relation of the composer to the mechanism of performance point up—at times with bitterness—the handicap of even the most distinguished composer in his relations with the huge machine which must be set in motion before a composition, particularly an orchestral work, may achieve its realization in sound. Every composer, be he great or small, knows the frustration frequently involved in the performance of his works. Neither the dictatorial authority of the educator, the omniscience of the critic, nor the business of the publisher escapes comment. The young, unrecognized composer may perhaps derive some wry comfort from these pronouncements from one so generously recognized.

Following the exposition of these

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conditions affecting the life of the composer, and particularly of the young composer, his acid comments on the young American composer seem to strike a discordant note which cannot be assimilated in the prevailing harmony. The American picture, according to Mr. Hindemith, would seem to be one of a host of composers, most of whom should not compose, working under the protection of a benign nationalism which encourages every American composer regardless of ability.

There are undoubtedly individual instances which can be cited to illustrate Mr. Hindemith's criticisms, but the gifted young American composer —or performer—will be surprised to learn that he is living under the protection of such a devoted nationalism. The fact that today only four major American orchestras are under the direction of native-born American conductors and that the performance of American symphonic works has, according to statistics, reached a new low should be to Mr. Hindemith a gratifying sign. An honest discussion of nationalism in art both here and abroad would be welcome, but the chiding of Americans for their all-too-meager support of their own art and artists by Europeans who are themselves so frequently the products of their own Gargantuan cultural nationalism must be regarded as a subtle form of Pickwickian humor.

Beat & the Rhythmical Note

A HISTORY OF JAZZ IN AMERICA. By Barry Ulanov. New York: Viking Press. 382 pp. $5.

By Frederic Ramsey, Jr.

IT MAKES a lot of sense to set down, in fairly concise fashion, a chronicle of the development of jazz in America. It adds up to even more sense when the chronicle is illuminated by illustrations and examinations of the music under discussion, then filled in with biographical matter based on historical data that are part stale, part fresh. A good index ties it all up in a neat manuscript, and here you have the unimpeachable virtues of Barry Ulanov's "A History of Jazz in America."

If as bonus there is some of the clearest exposition this reader has yet encountered of the whys, hows, and wherefores of the jazz music known as "progressive," "bop," and "cool," it all looks like a mighty fair proposition. Tack onto this the reasonable case that is pleaded against the all-too-popular fallacy of the exclusive origin of jazz in Africa, and you can include dragon-slaying as a lagniappe virtue.

From its very beginning (and it is a relief not to be assailed by what is now the cliché of African drums booming forth from the first lines), through New Orleans, Chicago, and what Ulanov calls the Diaspora, or dispersion, the history proceeds at a journalese typewriter-trot through chapters devoted to Bix Beiderbecke, Duke Ellington, swing music in general, and its spectacular sidemen in particular. There is an amusing side chapter titled "The Jazz Age," with a spate of quotations to show that everyone in the Twenties was writing about jazz, but nobody got there; there are chapters given to "Singers," "Pianists," "Figures of Transition," and finally, some concluding sections titled "Bop," "The Progressives," and "Cool Jazz," which take us into the working-out of ways of playing characterized by these names. The "cool" chronicle is considerably enhanced by quotations from musicians Stan Getz, Lee Konitz, and Lennie Tristano.

This is a fair bite for any author's incisors, but it's mere antipasto to Ulanov. From this adequate history, from these good expositions, he goes on to interpret the role of the jazz critic, and it is here, in this reader's opinion, that he falls flat on his face.

Research of the absolute, armed with a holy trinity of test tubes labeled Freshness, Profundity, Skill —this is his program for the critic, who, from some all-seeing vantage point, is supposed to impact his messianic visions of jazz perfection to musicians struggling in the heap at his feet. Other trinities of abstraction—the *"luxe, calme, et volupté"* of the Impressionists Ulanov is fond of quoting, or the *"race, milieu, moment"* of Hippolyte Taine—have come and gone, yet they have not produced the art and history they have attempted to resume.

Nor is the argument that jazz, because of its relative youth, is an art that can be examined as separate and entire (again, a test-tube procedure) a necessarily helpful one. In the first place, it assumes an all-knowing, or genius, role for the examiner; in the second place, it overlooks a point clearly enough set forth early in the "History," that jazz is a synthesis, and by this and similar claims made in its favor related to other acts of creation. "The ends are the ends of all art, the expression of the universal and the particular, the specific and the indirect and the intangible." The quote is from Ulanov.

"I'd like something for little boys with adult minds."

Frederic Ramsey, Jr., is co-author, with Charles Edward Smith, of "Jazzmen."

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According to Marx

HOW MUSIC EXPRESSES IDEAS. By Sidney Finkelstein. New York: International Publishers. 128 *pp.* $1.50.

By Gerald Abraham

ANYONE who knows anything of Marxist writing on the arts will be already all too familiar with Mr. Finkelstein's thesis: "Worthwhile" music always has a social meaning, springs from social conditions, expresses social ideas. If it comes from the "folk" it is good, healthy; if the "feudal aristocracy" have had anything to do with it it is good only if the composers have contrived to slip a fast one past their wicked employers. (The fact that Mr. Finkelstein has only the faintest idea of the meaning of the word "feudal" does not prevent his using it on almost every page; it is, of course, a useful term of abuse.) Even a non-Marxist may admit that social circumstances have played an important—though not a predominant—part in the historical development of music, and the Marxist case, if presented clearly, accurately, and without blatant propaganda, would at least make stimulating reading.

Mr. Finkelstein stimulates not the mind but certain facial muscles—not so much by his opinions as by his "facts." There is no need to wrangle with him about music in the USSR and the various other topics on which bourgeois reviewers are apt to be prejudiced. Let us consider Mr. Finkelstein's attitude to historical facts—particularly his tendency to assert as facts many things that are (to say the least) highly doubtful. "Guillaume Dufay," he tells us, "was born of peasant folk." Will Mr. Finkelstein please tell us how he knows? Hitherto Dufay's parentage has been an unsolved mystery. But Mr. Finkelstein knows some more about Dufay: "Dufay put lovely French folk songs into his church masses." Now of the two masses which Dufay based on secular themes, one is on a chanson of his own, the other on a melody whose origin no one knows and which could hardly be called lovely. However, Mr. Finkelstein hears a good many other things a trifle abnormally. According to him, the music of early opera "generally sounded strangely like refined or sentimentalized folk songs and dances" and Monteverdi's recitative is "reminiscent of old court ballads and church music."

Every page is rich with similar gems of statement. Couperin, Vivaldi, Buxtehude, Rameau, and Bach, we learn, were "treated by their patrons as *footmen or valets.*" All good Marxists, of course, admit that Tchaikovsky was "never pessimistic or morbid," but we really must ask Mr. Finkelstein his authority for the assertion that "both Beethoven and his audiences looked upon the symphony as a popularization of music, and in fact the more refined critics thought of it as vulgar." And when he implies that "Figaro" was written after "Don Giovanni" we fear he will find little backing even on the extreme Left.

The "Glossary of Musical Terms" is in every way worthy of the rest of the book. I particularly like the classification of the *ricercare* as "popular vocal music"—though it does arouse an uncomfortable suspicion that the whole thing may be a leg-pull and Mr. Finkelstein really a Fascist hyena in sheep's clothing. If so, I congratulate him on a very funny book.

Gerald Abraham, Alsop Professor of Music at the University of Liverpool, is author of many books on music, among them "Studies in Russian Music" and "Eight Soviet Composers."

Orchestra

By David Morton

THIS landscape—oddly, now, not sight but sound—
Arrives obliquely and would make the ear,
Not eye, its mark.

Listen how the sun-smitten field has found
A way of being strings, crying and near,
Against the sounding dark

Of the black woods that have the way of drums,
Supporting . . . sinister . . . like coming rain.—
The new moon's soaring horn,

As evening deepens, as the slow dark comes,
Is silver, sounding on another plane,
Ascendant and forlorn,

And sounds the more, the less the strings are heard
In muted quarter and diminished third.

Revised Estimate

DEBUSSY. By Edward Lockspeiser. New York: Pellegrini & Cudahy. 304 *pp.* $2.50.

By Roland Gelatt

THIS is the third edition of a "life and works" first published in 1937, now so thoroughly revised as almost to constitute a new book. Back in the Thirties, Mr. Lockspeiser put a low valuation on the products of Debussy's latter years, ascribing the spare neoclassicism of the last sonatas to a decline in the composer's creative powers. Since then he has come round to the much more tenable view that Debussy consciously worked away from his early sensuous hedonism and that the later works reveal a creative potency fully equal to "Nuages" and "Pelléas." This shift in Mr. Lockspeiser's estimate of the Debussy canon makes his book considerably more reliable as a critical guide than it was prior to revision.

It is, in fact, the best book in English on Debussy's music—but one still susceptible of improvement. Stylistically the author often goes off the deep end. We are assured, for instance, that "there are pages [of Debussy's music] which might almost bring music to the borders of an odoriferous or even—so completely are we regaled by this music of the senses—a saporific art." Nor is it only in the domain of verbal expression that improvement could be made. In his chapter on the piano music, Mr. Lockspeiser curiously neglects the influence of Ravel on Debussy and fails to discriminate between works of high assay and the near failures; moreover, he contents himself mainly with giving us his own literary recreations of Debussy's keyboard painting, instead of supplying us with much-needed formal analysis.

The chapter on the orchestral works is more successful. Here the reader will find a perceptive description of the Debussyan orchestra and a good beginning (though only a beginning) at laying bare the structural skeleton of "La Mer." On "Pelléas" Mr. Lockspeiser makes many sound observations, among them his conception of the opera as an extension of "Tristan" and a forerunner of "Wozzeck." He is an excellent guide also to Debussy's critical prose, which is so unlike this composer's music and often so alien to our ideal of well-tempered judgment.

Here, in sum, is an excellent introduction to Debussy which points the way to the exhaustive study still to be written.

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Television – An Aid to Education?

THOSE many skeptical and fearful critics of television who are carried about with every wind of doctrine that is hostile to that invention will perhaps, if they are open-minded, find grounds at least in a measure to allay their distrust in an experiment which has just been launched by the National Broadcasting Company in conjunction with *Life* magazine. For in it lies the possibility of a potent aid to education. The magazine and Station WNBT, Channel 4, have undertaken a program to be conducted daily for a month, in the course of which various phases of New York's school system will be presented to the public with a view to making clear not only the methods and conditions which prevail in our schools but the problems which confront the Board of Education in regard to them. The camera will carry the television audience into the classroom, the playground, and the Board meetings, it will broadcast forums of discussion at which prominent educators and civic leaders debate moot problems of policy and procedure, and, it may be hoped, will thus act as a catalytic agent for correction of abuses and the improvement of curriculum and conditions.

Here is an experiment of potentially far-reaching importance. There is no means so effective of stirring interest in education as showing the school in operation, for there is nothing at once so dramatic and so touching as youth at grips with its world. There is no means more direct for conveying the thronging problems which confront the community and the teacher than by depicting the daily routine of the schoolroom, the physical, moral, and intellectual conditions under which the children work, the methods of instruction, the personalities of the instructors. Even the most enlightened and conscientious parent finds it difficult to get comprehensive knowledge of the atmosphere and environment under which his child pursues his studies, for he cannot make more than occasional visits to the school and his very presence there is a conditioning influence on proceedings. Even parent-teacher meetings, illuminating and stimulating though they may be, deal in the main with special problems rather than the over-all pattern of the school system and rest in large part on relayed information.

It is the common experience of maturity to look back upon early years with a wistful realization of the almost impossibility of recapturing the mood of childhood. Time softens everything, and problems that once loomed gigantic, fallen into the perspective of later life, lose their intensity of emotion. Some vivid moment remains, some instant of triumph or humiliation, some reminiscent anxiety or hope, but the edge of experience is blunted by the accretion of living and by the inescapable romanticizing instinct which transforms the pattern of the past. We cannot be children again, alas, but perhaps, thrust into their midst as television can thrust us, we can live again something of the poignance of their reaction to life.

As to the more practical benefits to be drawn from the televising program they should be patent to all who realize the imperative impact of the thing seen rather than reported. The overcrowding of the schools, so much bewritten, so little visualized by the public not immediately concerned; the handling of problems of discipline and mental unreadiness; the methods of instruction (how often does the pupil of yesterday feel dismayed incomprehension of the procedures of today!); the routine of work and play, the administrative conferences, all that goes to make up the modern school intellectually and physically, these are now to be presented graphically so that all who see may understand and add civic weight to professional endeavor. This experiment of NBC and *Life* has the cooperation of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of the New York Schools. It is one of a growing number of undertakings, such as the recent Connecticut examination into the educational system of the state, the National Citizens Commission for Public Schools, and the forums conducted by newspapers, which are focusing attention upon the work of the school. It deserves the attention of all who are interested in education and in youth. And who is not that realizes that in our children lies the future of our world? —A. L.

Round Song

By Dilys Bennett Laing

THE children warm our winter like hours of April.
They of the lark mind, the speech of laughing thaw,
crackle the tomb with roots that run like veins.
We are Lazarus, bandaged with an age of days.
They with their Easter hands undo our death.
We are the buried. The world is a clod upon us.
They are the airy morning, a wood of budding birch.
We are the dead. We are the horrible examples.
They are the green resurgence. They are tomorrows,
and confident, difficult innocence of new trials.
They shall be Lazarus, with unbreathing bark.
They shall be swaddled too in a cradle of failure.
They shall be old too, as evening is with no dew risen.
Their children shall warm their winters like hours of April,
they of the lark mind, the speech of laughing thaw,

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr. Crum on the Arabs

SIR: "Israel is the pioneering country of 1951, just as California was the pioneering country of 1851. . . . Behind it lies a vast, fertile hinterland, the pioneering areas of tomorrow, whose soil yearns for water and the plow, for industrialization, good living, and freedom for about forty million oppressed *fellahin*." Thus far Bartley C. Crum in his tendentious review of Hal Lehrman's "Israel" [*SR* Feb. 9].

The comparison is significant if it reveals the real intentions of Americans who intend in the name of Israel to take over the Near East in the name of "pioneering," with its *fellahin* and its oil. Are the Bedawin included in your *fellahin*, Mr. Crum? If not, who are these forty million? The Iraqi, eight hundred miles away? The Egyptians? The Syrians of well-watered Lebanon? And how do you know that all the forty million are oppressed? Or is this, perhaps, a cliché of the advocates of the "pioneering" policy?

The comparison of Britain to Pilate is also to be criticized as lacking in good taste and in truth. It can scarcely please either Israelis or Arabs. In saying that the Arab leaders would "be paid their price" under an "unrealistic" policy of the United States, Mr. Crum is more than hinting at bribery and corruption. He surely is not referring to aid for refugees or Point Four. Or is he?

Finally, in insisting that the United States "talk forcefully" to "the Arab rulers" to end their boycott of Israel, Mr. Crum is suggesting a method which defies the United Nations quite as much as the Arab actions which he denounces.

If this is reviewing, let the Arabs have a chance to reply. Not "leaders" or "rulers," but "citizens" like Mr. Crum.

HENRY NOBLE MACCRACKEN.

Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

"In Defense of Free Culture"

SIR: May I draw your readers' attention to a forthcoming event of interest to them? On March 29, the American Committee for Cultural Freedom will hold three panel discussions on the general theme "In Defense of Free Culture," at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City.

Some of the most controversial questions of the day will be fully aired by an array of impressive speakers. The morning panel will take up the question that probably agitates most American liberals, "Who Threatens Cultural Freedom in America?"—the Communists or the McCarthyites, that is. Ranged against each other on this problem will be men of such opposing views as Max Eastman and Elmer Rice, with Richard H. Rovere, Mary McCarthy, Conway Zirkle, and George S. Counts contributing a further variety of opinions. A luncheon will feature the new Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, the Hon. H. Howland Sargeant, on what Government is doing to counteract foreign myths and sterotypes about America; Professor F.S.C. Northrop, of Yale, on bridging the differences between Western and Eastern cultures; and Professor Sidney Hook, of New York University, on the work of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. At the afternoon panel, Lionel Trilling, Arthur Koestler, Lewis Galantière, France Lombardi (Rome University), Sir C. P. Rama Swami Aiyer (Calcutta University), and Bertram D. Wolfe will comment on cultural conditions on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

The subscription is five dollars per person, which covers all three sessions including the luncheon. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, 35 West 53rd Street, New York 19, N. Y.

DANIEL JAMES,
Program & Publications Director.

New York, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"As for the Persians—I would sort of gloss over them until after the election."

Facts for Survival

SIR: David L. Cohn's "Idea of the Soldier" [*SR* Feb. 9] is beautifully tragic. What of the common tragedy, the everyday tragedy, my tragedy? How many times have the faces closed and "Communist" and "sentimental woman" and "do you know the statistics" come muttering, fluttering, birds of ill omen, to perch on my bright, hopefully considered argument for beginning to start, to commence, to suggest, to consider a world constitutional convention? Sometimes I become so fiercely lonely that I hate everybody. I know there are thousands like me. Not fools, looking for a leader. Not children, seeking a parent. Simply everyday mortals, who know, because they are reasonably sensible, that in order to accomplish anything steps must be taken, who realize that it is easier to have an enemy than it is to fight it out alone, and that that easy way is the real reason for every high-flown moral conflict afflicting the nations, the states or provinces, the cities, the precincts, the homes.

We must accept, and I fear to say this, the absolute fact that there is right on both sides as well as wrong. We must feel strong enough to accept our enemies. And for this we must have the protection of law. . . . What I feel impelled to say and ask is, how to combat the force, the thing, the coward, the clever dodger, whatever it is, that says "Wait." I need factual material to bolster my arguments. I need an organization that doesn't merely defend itself and wrangle among its own elements. I need lessons from clear minds to implement my own earnest endeavors. I can weep. I can laugh. What I want from David L. Cohn, and possibly in his book I will get it, is not the emotion, but the help to utilize that emotion. What I want from *The Saturday Review*, and from every philosopher, scientist, thinker, poet, teacher, is considered, disciplined, helpful suggestions, not statements of the status quo, or barings of the soul. What can we do to obtain world law, world government? Is there an alternative? Of course, we're not ready, we'll never be ready. We are ready enough. We are interested in survival—not in how sad it is, how bad it is, how reasonable it is that we must be destroyed.

DOROTHY H. KIRCHNER.

Anaheim, Calif.

SIR: If David L. Cohn will read Norman Angell's autobiography, "After All," he will discover that one of the illusions Norman Angell has been fighting for the last forty years is the notion that he proved "that since modern wars were profitless, modern wars would cease." On the contrary, while David Cohn was reading "The Great Illusion," Norman Angell was working desperately against time to prevent the war which he saw was coming; but, like Mencken and the by-law against bathtubs, he has never been able to catch up with the misunderstanding of his original idea.

FREDA F. WALDON.

Hamilton, Canada.

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Seeing Things

ROYAL PROGRESS

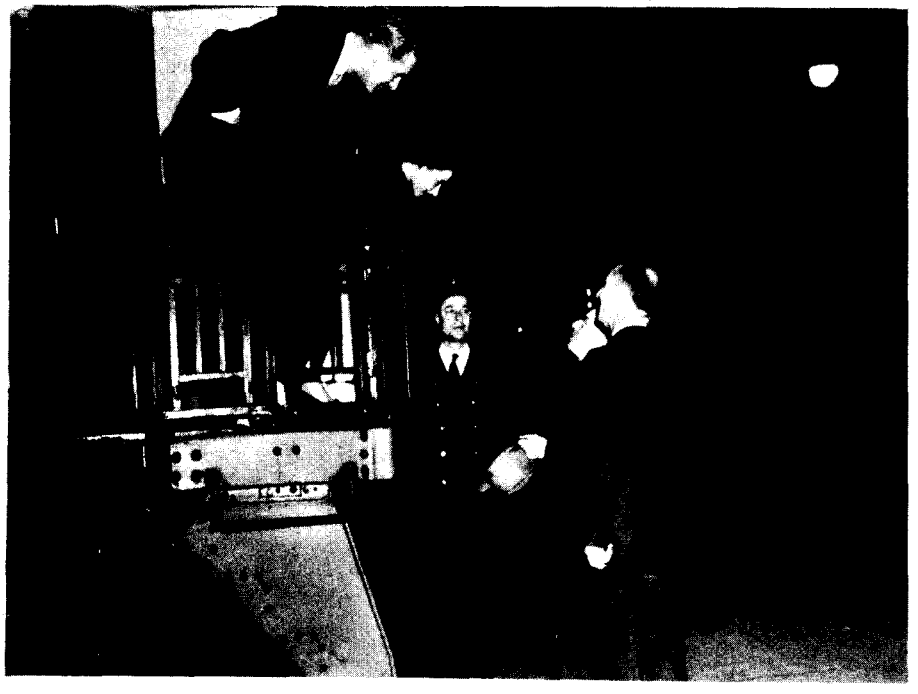
SPECIALISTS in any field are bound to see what they see in terms of their mobilized enthusiasms. "The Royal Journey," that admirable documentary recording the visit paid to Canada and Washington last fall by Elizabeth and Philip, is a case in point. Although camera addicts and professional followers of the screen have been warm in their praise of the film's human qualities, perhaps inevitably their interest has centered in the excellence of its color photography.

More than the rest of us, these specialists are aware of the pitfalls of such photography. They know how it can distort the most pastel of nature's tints until they flame with a blazer's brightness. They know how often a gray sea is transformed into something bluer than a Wave's uniform; how pale people can be made to look as if they had been feasting on pink pills; and how easily pinks (if Senator McCarthy will forgive me) can be converted into reds. They have noted that color pictures are apt to admit only one time of day—noon. They are conscious that in them the weather is usually more ideal than even travel folders would dare to suggest. They are also familiar with the difficulties of taking any shots under certain unfavorable conditions.

No wonder they have been excited by the beauty, variety, and truth of the photography in "The Royal Journey." In its reels neither Washington nor the changing expanses of Canada acquire that tropical picture-postcard look so dear to most travelogues. Cities and people are left unrouged. Nature does not fly under false colors. The weather alters, and can be felt as well as seen. The time is not always the same. Dresses and uniforms are not dipped in violent dyes. A rainy day is captured in all of its gentle mistiness. Autumn leaves are not turned into Indians painted for the warpath. Old buildings are granted their dignity and spared rejuvenation. The blue-greens and whites of the distant Laurentians are shown in their beckoning softness. The color work is so true that it catches even the drab and sullen grays of the southeaster which drenched the royal couple as they left Newfoundland.

Yet fine as "The Royal Journey" is technically, its technique is not what makes it for most of us a film unique in its interest, its poignancy, and the thoughts it stirs. We bring to it a knowledge of subsequent events. We realize that this is a travelogue shadowed by history. What has happened since it was made is as much in our minds as what happens in the picture. We are never unaware that the Elizabeth who moves through it as a Princess is now England's Queen. A slim, grave girl in black, greeted by mourning statesmen as she stepped from her plane on her return from Africa, is as much in our thoughts as the smiling girl we see acknowledging the cheers of Canadians.

When Elizabeth landed in Canada, her father, in Mr. Churchill's phrase, was already walking "with death as if death were a companion, an acquaintance whom he recognized and did not fear." Unworried as the Princess looks, anxiety was deep in her heart. In this sense, more than being the symbol of empire, she is a symbol of all youth which sooner or later must take over, not knowing whether it will be sooner or later. The uncertainty common to the happiest homes as the years pass is also hers.



"... a travelogue shadowed by history."

QUITE aside from their private apprehensions, the public task Elizabeth and Philip faced in Canada must have been a grueling one. It granted them little freedom and less privacy. They were, as they had to be, exhibits always on exhibition. Their business was twofold—to be seen by as many people as possible, and to be liked (as they plainly were) by all who saw them. No Presidential candidate could have had a more merciless schedule. Their days were an unbroken succession of changing clothes, meeting people, facing crowds, and attending functions; of train rides, whistle stops, and journeys by sea or air.

Beyond dispute they must have been bored at times. Unquestionably they were often exhausted. So perfect is their training, however, that to an incredible degree throughout the film they manage to give duty the appearance of pleasure. A future queen and her consort appear in it as two very likable young people who never fail to look interested, who always seem gracious, and who succeed in being charming without any sacrifice of dignity.

Both have genuine poise. Both are blessed with good looks and youth. Philip is tall, erect, sandy-haired, and dashing. He has a broad and warming grin. If of the two he seems the more easy-going and relaxed, Elizabeth has her own ingratiating qualities. She is trim and attractive, and has a sweet, serious face which shines when she smiles. Even as a princess she possesses the repose and carriage of a queen.

There is an unforgettable moment

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". . . blessed with youth and good looks."

at an official gathering when Philip sits down before Elizabeth thinks he should. She gives him quickly, quietly, but firmly that correcting glance known to all husbands as the "wife look." Young as she is, when she does this there is no mistaking that the blood of Queen Victoria and Queen Mary flows in her veins.

Although the Princess may be shy, she never appears embarrassed. Indeed, her suspected shyness only makes her self-possession the more appealing. She is both human and royal. Standing on the bridge of a ship, her hair tied up in a scarf, she is the most natural and simple of girls. At a reception, dressed in a white gown and wearing a diamond tiara, she is the embodiment of a storybook princess.

IT is fascinating to watch the crowds which everywhere turn out to greet these two nice young people. They are crowds that have waited patiently, sometimes for hours, in the bitter cold or rain. They include wounded soldiers, yelling school children, nuns, fishermen, ranchers, city folk, Eskimos, and Indians. Usually they sing "God Save the King"; sometimes "Dieu Sauve le Roi." Making them one wherever they assemble is the concept of allegiance to the Crown. Such a concept in the contemporary world may seem an anachronism, yet manifestly it remains a strong, unifying force. It is a tangible intangible which, indefinable as it is, must be counted among the most potent of the Commonwealth's assets.

In most cases the crowds have no more than a glimpse of the royal couple. Nonetheless, the determination to have that glimpse speaks for abiding hungers. Curiosity is an ancient

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urge, as Eve would have to admit. Undoubtedly, it drove people into the streets and to station platforms all the way across Canada.

But curiosity was by no means the only compulsion. Fortune could not have been kinder than having two such handsome and winning young people represent one of the most venerable of British traditions. They were youth personifying a great and long past. They were proofs that the Old Country was still close to the New. In the midst of the present's dissensions and animosities, they were polarizing points for affection. They, and the pageantry revived to welcome them, brought needed reassurance in an insecure world that there are things which survive, strong and unshaken.

NO ONE responsive at all to the echoes of history can see Elizabeth and Philip on the Plains of Abraham without a stirring awareness of the past and present overlapping. When Elizabeth reviews troops from a white jeep instead of a white charger, the extent to which the machine age has overtaken medievalism is amusingly demonstrated.

But in spite of all changes, the British Crown continues. Though its powers have been drastically and fortunately curtailed, it has adapted itself to the new order, and in the process gained a new strength. Being beyond party or politics, it flourishes on character as much as tradition. Goodness is its chief obligation; goodness its real power. That persuasive and steadying goodness, backed by youth and charm, shines as clearly as the fine color work of the photographers in "The Royal Journey."

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

". . . . a storybook princess."

Broadway Postscript

ANTA has two "Golden Boys" these days: producer Robert Whitehead, who has hit three jackpots in a row, and the revival of the Clifford Odets classic, which should run about as long as those connected with it wish it to. The production of "Golden Boy" is what can best be described as a bargain package. A personal appearance by the combustible John Garfield, a magnificent performance by Lee J. Cobb, a tour de force by the reptilian Joseph Wiseman, and three hilarious minor portrayals by Michael Lewin, Rudy Bond, and Arthur O'Connell are all included in the price of one admission. And if that's not enough, you can add a directing job by the author which contains brilliant spurts of effective theatre (the boxer releasing his pent up emotions on the cord of the window shade as if it were a punching bag, or the illiterate fight promoter laughing in antiphonal response to the sound of the boxer's vicious bag-slapping).

Only the ungrateful will be foolish enough to look the current "Golden Boy" in the mouth. When they do, they may find that while the dialogue remains as fresh as it was in 1937, the motives behind some of the characters' actions now tend to seem less real than they did fifteen years ago. A violin-playing humaneness and a professional boxing ruthlessness are black and white alternatives which look artificially extreme to a world that has learned to live in the gray. This may explain why Mr. Cobb as the boxer-violinist's Old World father appears to be a solitary Stanislavski-ite in search of a related actor. Except for a put-on bow-legged walk, his performance is intensely real and he provides the show's best moment when he hugs his son passionately in the midst of a fierce disagreement.

These sudden bursts of deep feeling are also Mr. Garfield's meat, and this part of the character of Joe Bonaparte he expresses superbly. As for the gentler facets, it is another story. In 1937 Harold Clurman turned down Mr. Garfield for the role because he felt the fiery young actor "had neither the variety nor the pathos to sustain the role." Mr. Garfield has had a considerable coming up in the world since his Group Theatre days, but he still does not give the impression that he could play a musical instrument much more intricate than the bass drum.

Despite these weaknesses, ANTA's "Golden Boy" is rich in humor and theatricality and is memorable even where it is not entirely credible.

—HENRY HEWES.

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SR Goes to the Movies

STANLEY KRAMER'S SIX CONVICTS

—From "My Six Convicts."

". . . an urgent sense of humanity."

NO SMALL part of young Stanley Kramer's startling success in the movie industry has been due to his persistent search for offbeat material, for stories that any larger studio would think twice about filming, and then reject. Producer of "Champion," "Home of the Brave," "The Men," and the current "Death of a Salesman," Kramer advances sound arguments to justify his somewhat unorthodox story selections. "To make a place for himself," he wrote recently, "the independent producer has to *add* something to the industry's output. He cannot be a small-scale echo of what the majors are doing—much better than he can hope to." But Kramer has actually added more than simply unusual stories. The whole approach to films in the Kramer organization is a convincing reaffirmation of the old principle that motion pictures are really a collaborative effort. No single, shining geniuses here. Instead, a solid nucleus of intelligent, hard-working, film-conscious men—production designer Rudolph Sternad, editorial supervisor Harry Gerstad, production manager Clem Beauchamp, composer Dimitri Tiomkin, and, until a few months ago, writer Carl Foreman—who make their contributions in a working plan that is smooth and efficient, a plan that calls for a maximum of pre-production preparation and rehearsal. Shooting time, the greatest single expense in any film, is held to an absolute minimum.

Kramer's non-star combination, with the addition of screen writer Michael Blankfort, is now responsible for "My Six Convicts" (Columbia), a vigorous and adult filming of Donald Powell Wilson's best seller of last year. Blankfort has done a remarkable adaptation, stringently avoiding the more obvious movie aspects of Wilson's somewhat sensational account of prison psychiatry, and correcting most of the chronological discrepancies that troubled critics of the original book. But its core remains, the steady accumulation of data on the criminal mind and what makes it tick. (Kramer seems to feel that the best way to make a good picture is to start with a strong script. He puts less emphasis on the star director than any quality producer in Hollywood today.)

To enact the hardened cons and their wary warders, Kramer has worked a miracle of casting. John Beal is excellent as the young psychiatrist introduced into a Mid-Western prison by a reform administration and faced with the problem of winning the confidence both of the convicts and the prison officials. But the six convicts of the title, the six men who finally volunteer to make up the doctor's permanent staff, are the center of the story, and Millard Mitchell as Connie, the prison-wise safecracker, Gilbert Roland as Punch, the tough killer who rules his fellow-convicts by fear, and Jay Adler as Kopac, the pathetic ex-bookkeeper who finds life easier inside the walls than out, are the real stars of the film. Discovering their personalities, their characters, their minds becomes at least as exciting as the melodramatic prison break that marks the film's finale.

All of this has been put together with a cleanness, a lack of waste motion that makes the picture constantly absorbing. There is sure film craft in every scene, a knowledge of how to build tension and when to let relax with a laugh, when to pour on sound and when to use silence. Photographically, too, "My Six Convicts" is a striking job. The camera seems to penetrate to the core of whatever it may be shooting. You see not only the grime on the men's faces, but also the sweat beneath the dirt. The prison is an old one, and you see the scars on its walls, feel the harshness of its concrete, the solidity of its steel. But more important than all the skilled picture-making, there is an urgent sense of humanity about this film. "We have shown you these men," it seems to say, "not for mere sensationalism, but to help you understand what a criminal is, and why. Now, what are *you* going to do about it?" "My Six Convicts" will not leave you unconcerned about the answer.

IF THE technique of "My Six Convicts" is to hurl its question at you at the very end, the technique of "Deadline—U.S.A." (Fox), which seems to blend the recent death of the *New York Sun* with the even more recent investigation of Frank Costello, is to reassure its customers at the very last minute that everything is being properly taken care of. And that manages to take away some of the punch, some of the immediacy from an efficient and frequently effective demonstration of the power of the press. But *writer* Richard Brooks has created a story which, as the various threads almost casually come together, gathers its life and vigor from situations that are constant reminders of the day's headlines. His language is often tart and amusing, his situations generally tense and dramatic. And *director* Richard Brooks has set all this in a world he obviously knows and loves. No reporters with hats tilted to the back of their heads, no clutter of whiskey bottles. His is a hard-working city room, the staff carrying on a sensational crime syndicate expose despite the fact that their paper is being sold out from under them. There is a nice awareness of the facts of life about "Deadline—U.S.A."—cer-

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tainly of life in the newspaper world —and it sustains the film even through scenes that are overwritten or superfluous. Humphrey Bogart is effective as the hard-pressed editor of *The Day*, Kim Hunter attractive as his divorced wife, and Ethel Barrymore, Martin Gabel, and Joseph De Santis stand out in a capable supporting cast.

"Faithful City" (RKO), the latest feature film to come from Israel, is by all odds the best to date. This may still leave something to be desired, for its story line is crude and its acting, in many instances, over-emphatic; but what it wants to say is touching and important and apparently true. "Faithful City" underlines the concern of the new republic for its children, the children who have come to Israel from all parts of the world. They come full of fear and distrust. It takes an Arab attack on their settlement finally to convince the children that their new government does intend to care for them and the picture closes on a properly optimistic note. The efforts of an American summer camp councillor to cope with these kids provide a rather amusing contrast with the quiet wisdom of an older Hungarian Jew, and there are many similar pleasant touches. Josef Leytes produced and directed, and everyone connected with the film—including the public-relations man—gets a screen credit, except the writer!

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.

SR Recommends

My Six Convicts: Reviewed in this issue.

Deadline—U.S.A.: Reviewed in this issue.

The Belle of New York: Fred Astaire as nimble as ever, with some captivating Currier & Ives backdrops. (*SR* Mar. 22.)

The Marrying Kind: Matrimony runs a bumpy but witty course as delineated by actress Judy Holliday, director George Cukor, and writers Kanin & Gordon. (*SR* Mar. 22.)

The Magic Garden: A light-hearted comedy from South Africa, with a plot compounded of miracles and a substratum of satire. (*SR* Mar. 15.)

Navajo: American Indians in conflict and contact with mid-century USA. (*SR* Mar. 15.)

5 *Fingers*: L. C. Moyzisch's "Operation Cicero" turned into a spy film that avoids all the usual clichés of the genre and includes an abundance of the Mankiewicz sophistication. (*SR* Mar. 8.)

Cry, the Beloved Country: A sensitive screen translation by Alan Paton of his moving novel of South African life. (*SR* Feb. 2.)

Decision Before Dawn: An exciting, but arguable presentation of a "good German" PW who spies for us. (*SR* Dec. 29.)

Death of a Salesman: An honest, dignified filming of one of the decade's most moving plays. (*SR* Dec. 22.)

Detective Story: Faithful, moving adaptation of Sidney Kingsley play, well-acted and only slightly modified for the innocent movie-goer.

TV and Radio

THREE SHOWS OF SOCIAL UTILITY

"IT's a Problem," NBC-TV's daily, noon-hour panel program, rendered a public service recently when it discussed America's mentally retarded children (there are three million of them below sixteen years of age) under the intelligent title "Children Under Par." Educator Helen Parkhurst, novelist Pearl Buck, Dr. Lawrence B. Slobody, and Dr. Harold Michal-Smith were the panelists and Ben Grauer led the conversation.

Broad as are the current criteria which are used in defining a mentally retarded child—one with an I.Q. below seventy who cannot keep up with his companions intellectually—the three-million figure must have come as a shock to many viewers. The panel agreed that, generally, there is no official recognition of the problem. The speakers decried the social stigma attached to mentally retarded children and the hush-hush attitude of families and communities. They stressed the difference between insanity and retardation. They told about an Association of Parents of Retarded Children which acts as a clearing house for advice and information. A panelist reported that at a New York City clinic where mentally retarded children and their mothers are treated "amazing things happen to the child" when the mother's tension and sense of shame are dispelled. The panel finally urged the full acceptance by the community of the child under par, "who is as normal as far as he goes," as a spark which would spread a healthy spirit from parents to the children themselves.

"It's a Problem" does not always have as profoundly human a subject with which to deal, but this series consistently sends out to receptive homemakers a wide variety of socially useful ideas. If inexpensive panel shows are the best answer the networks can manage for the mid-day public service problem, then "It's a Problem" is a good answer. Much of its quality derives from the discussion leadership of Ben Grauer, who expertly bridges the gap between specialist and layman.

"How Did They Get That Way?" is ABC-TV's contribution to mass mental hygiene. In a recent Monday-night program on "The Youth Quest," moderator Isabel Leighton, who is a trustee of the Menninger Foundation, tried to get from her guests an understanding of America's accent on youth. The program's point did not come across too clearly. The personnel director of the Westinghouse Corporation explained his company's policy of recruiting only very young men; Ann Delafield, the beautician, aimed a heavy powder-puff at "the cosmetic myth" which seeks to persuade women that they can get "youth out of a bottle"; a representative of the 40 Plus Club was present; so was columnist Cobina Wright; and the evening's therapist, Dr. John A. P. Millet, turned an accusing finger at our covered-wagon, new-fields-to-conquer tradition as an important agent in our national youth cult. He noted the "increasing compensations of each decade" as well as "the anxiety, resentment, and chip-on-the shoulder emotional habits which make people old."

Individually the contributions were effective: together they failed to add up to a satisfying conclusion. Miss Leighton should not read her questions so obviously, nor ought she to indulge in such small amateurisms as "I see I'm being wigwagged at; there's no more time." "How Did They Get That Way?" is an improvement on its forerunner "What's on Your Mind?" but this serious, well-motivated effort needs a yet sharper focus.

In a program on polio, the first of a series offered jointly by NBC-TV and the New York County Medical Society, "Here's to Your Health" combined public service and popular interest with rare success. The telecast's aim was to dispel the false fears about

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polio which are often created "by a casual suggestion of a well-meaning friend or by an enthusiastic yet carelessly planned piece of health propaganda." The program's success lay not in the early "drama" scenes, in which a fictional mother exhibited a hysterical response to the family doctor's announcement that her son had polio. Neither was the effect scored by the honest but familiar authority-in-exposition stint of Dr. Hart Van Riper, medical director of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, who corrected misconceptions about polio.

"Here's to Your Health" came alive only when Dr. Howard Rusk, director of New York's Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, introduced his audience to half a dozen patients, ages three to thirty-four, in various attitudes of exercise or occupational therapy strengthening them physically and psychologically for dominion over polio. "It is impossible to disable courage and ambition," said Dr. Rusk, and his inspiring examples proved it. There is nothing more universal than the specific; and the specifics of very real individuals fighting and overcoming to live, in the words of Dr. Rusk, "to the hilt of their abilities within their limitations" made compelling listening-viewing.

The program's affirmative approach is to the credit of Dr. Lester L. Coleman, who originated the series and produces it, and of the New York County Medical Society, which is officially involved. The producers have abjured the easy paths staked out for medical programs, the high road of the "shock 'em" treatment and the low road of sentimentality. The accent is on truthfulness according to medicine's latest knowledge and on human courage in suffering. It is a good accent. There is no better way for the doctors as a professional group to promote their public relations—a by-product of the series' aim—than by underscoring, not their own virtues, but the strengths of the real heroes in the war against disease: the patients and their families.

—Robert Lewis Shayon.

Solution of Last Week's Double-Crostic (No. 939)

IRWIN EDMAN:

UNDER WHATEVER SKY

There is said to be a strain about life in New York. I think I'm beginning to see now what it is. In a small prairie town in Montana I should not be torn in one evening between the Ballet Theatre and three Beethoven quartets — or work.

Music to My Ears.

CHESTERTONIAN "MEISTERSINGER"—BERNSTEIN AT THE BOSTON

Hans Hopf—"contribution of value."

RECALLING that G. K. Chesterton once admired the electric signs of Broadway as a marvelous sight for a man who couldn't read, one could cite the latest occurrence of Wagner's "Meistersinger" at the Metropolitan as a blessed experience for a man who couldn't see. The line in the program which read "Scenery designed and painted by Hans Kautsky in 1923" told one succinct story about it. Thanks to a well-balanced, well-directed cast, there is another and better story to report.

Nobody could contend that this first performance was a dream of beauty, but it had voices well suited to the assigned tasks in every major role, the action as devised by Dino Yannopolous moved smoothly, and the focal point was where it should be—at the conductor's desk, where Fritz Reiner maintained positive and propulsive control. Hans Hopf as Walther and Richard Holm as David were making debuts, while Walburga Wegner (Eva) and Alois Pernestorfer (Pogner) sang their roles for the first time. All had contributions of value to make.

Save for Torsten Ralf, Hopf is the aptest voice for Walther the Metropolitan has had in years, and Holm is obviously a master as David, if an apprentice in the story. Assuming that a debut diminishes a singer's output by 25 per cent at least, both are likely to be better next time—which should be very good indeed. Actually, Holm moved in and around the tricky vocal line of his part with surety and assertion; Hopf impressed one as the kind of singer still to learn how to get the best out of his voice.

Wegner looked well, and sang some phrases charmingly. She makes things difficult for herself with an odd kind of production, often throttling the tone before it is fully projected, but she is certainly the Eva type, which neither Steber nor Varnay of recent memory were. Beside such eminent Metropolitan Evas as Lehmann or Rethberg she is a mere beginner; but well worth watching develop. As Pogner, Pernestorfer offers a lighter voice than is traditional, or desirable. However, he sings the crucial top notes cleanly, makes a plausible sound for the low ones, and pontificates in the manner dear to Pogners. Herbert Janssen being indisposed for Kothner, it was adequately served by Kenneth Schon.

If the foregoing suggests that this was a Sachless "Meistersinger" or one lacking the foil of a proper Beckmesser, it merely respects the fact that Paul Schoeffler has become an accepted criterion for the big role, as Gerhard Pechner has for the somewhat lesser one. Schoeffler is not quite the endearing kind of Sachs, the voice lacking real sweetness—but it has unflagging power, intelligence, and keen attention to detail. Among Beckmessers, Pechner is quite as good as memory recalls, and the Met has had its share of good ones. Hertha Glaz was a smallish but well-sounding 'Lene.

What distinguished this "Meistersinger" from other recent ones with as much total vocal virtue—if not so evenly distributed—was the strong pulse and skilful integration provided by Reiner, the well-organized stage direction of Yannopoulos. Beginning with a spacious playing of the Prelude, Reiner's direction merged a clean articulation of the musical design with accent, emphasis, and contrast as one likes to hear it. One musical high spot was the choral finale of Act II, another the Prelude to Act III. The first profited by a reorganization of the choral ensemble (wider spacing of the scenery broadened the usual narrow alley between the homes of Sachs and Pogner), but the second was due wholly to Reiner's way with orchestral masses, functioning here with full efficiency. Welcome, too, was the reappearance of some choice matter in Acts I and II usually cut.

When the Met's budget permits a

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newly staged and freshly studied production of "Meistersinger," the present cast and conductor are strong central elements on which to build. At least it seems clear that Hopf, Holm, and Wegner should get better before they get worse.

* * *

Leonard Bernstein's appearance as the last of emergency replacements for Charles Munch as conductor of the Boston Symphony had its share of rejoicing and regret. Talent of his order writes its own rules—such as spending part of one program as soloist-conductor in the E flat (K. 271) Piano Concerto of Mozart, another with a version for orchestral strings of Beethoven's C sharp minor (Opus 131) quartet. Each proposed a more than ordinary amount of self-esteem on the conductor's part; neither quite justified it.

As a matter of propriety, one wondered about both. Bernstein's piano playing is hardly good enough to be imposed on us, automatically, whenever he appears (as has happened rather regularly of late); and it is questionable that his views on the Beethoven quartet added much to those of the well-versed Bostonian strings. In both instances applause was forthcoming, with or without provocation.

The playing of the Beethoven quartet had certain elements of virtue, among them the support of double basses in some passages where the work moves out of the status of chamber music to something like orchestral force. But these are a small percentage of the total, and the ear was more often aware of inner lines thickened and overstressed, of an intimate expression swelled and distorted by a conductor's intrusive personality. As for the innumerable footstamps and heel-beats Bernstein permitted himself, they would have been out of place in a Wagner overture, and were downright distracting where they added an unscored pedal point to the strings. One noted that they invariably occurred at a change of tempo, meaning they were a necessity for the conductor not the players. Let's make the charitable view that Bernstein merely forgot himself, not his conservatory lessons.

The anticipated performance of Alban Berg's "Der Wein" did not make all its points. Patricia Neway is an accomplished soprano and an intelligent one, but she does not have as much technical discipline as this matter requires, nor the sensuousness of voice to make audible the powers of wine.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

FICTION

(*Continued from page 15*)

possess "what you might call a fire-stick, made not of brass or gold but of a gray-black metal."

But to Damsang's entranced audience and to Kendik, the heroine of the novel, the men of the "fire-sticks" seem almost as fabulous as the tall yellow men who had also sailed from their homeland (China) to settle and trade in southern Luzon. And it is through the eyes of Kendik that Mrs. Montague spins her tale of ancient customs coming into their first contact—it is still contact and not collision—with the new. Kendik, attracted to Damsang, takes him to the girl's house to sleep with her as was the custom of her people, the Bontok Igorots, who believed in what we would call trial marriage. When Damsang leaves to go to his own village, he gives Kendik his most priceless possession, a "fire-stick." Damsang never returns to the girl. An enemy tribe, the Igorot Ifugaos, beheads him. Kendik falls in love with Balinag but marries another man, and it is only years later, after war with the Ifugaos, after a truce among the Igorot tribes to meet the common danger of the "fire-stick" men that Kendik is reunited with Balinag.

"Send the Wise Wind" is at its best when it describes the day-by-day life of the Igorots, these "dike menders, weeders in breach strings and shirts of red and indigo and white." The fictional aspects of the novel are routine. The story of Kendik and the three men in her life, Damsang the wanderer, Balinag the builder, and Andaguig the father of her children, somehow seems less Igorot than Hollywood.

—*M. Lasser.*

Georgianne Sampson—"sensitive . . . acute."

Kendik is believable where we see her in the slow tempo of a sun-bound as well as a sun-worshiping people. But not when she is whirled through battle, intrigue, conspiracy, epidemic, and eclipse, that in the end comes out all right—for Eng-ya the wife of Balinag and Andaguig the husband of Kendik both die—leaving the lovers free to marry. But this is a first novel; and not only first, but second, and even filth movies have leaned far too heavily on the crutch of "movie action" and "movie love interest." The novel as an art form has enough vitality to stand on its own feet if novelists will only let it.

Fiction Notes

THE KEY TO THE OTHER. By Georgianne Sampson. Doubleday. $2.75. Miss Sampson's title is a quotation from Isak Dinensen: "Man and woman are two locked caskets, of which each contains the key to the other." In this searching story Miss Sampson explores the breakdown of a marriage in which neither party found those keys. She deals with motives, problems, and conflicts of three people—Libby herself; her husband, Peter Benedikt; and Tom Goddard, whose course of neurotic self-destruction carried a terrible potential of ruin for Libby, but who was the means at last by which she saw herself clear, stripped in her own eyes of all the disguises she had worn.

This is primarily the history of Libby's coming-of-age as a woman, and the author subjects her to a merciless yet sympathetic scrutiny. As a character she is completely real: intense, impulsive, warm-hearted, on the defensive, in fact unsure of herself and in theory stubbornly unyielding, insistent upon meeting life on her own terms. And those terms were an unconscious self-identification with the grown-up little girl, wanting but rebelling against an all-powerful parent; with the worshiper seeking a god and in very fear of that god locking herself away; with the perfectionist, doubting her own capacity to give and rejecting that which is given not by a god, but by a man, imperfect and her equal. And finally, in her brief relationship with the alcoholic Tom Goddard she dreamed of still another role, that of the rescuer, the comforter, the wise and patient regenerator. And in all of them she failed.

Peter Benedikt, whose sophisticated European upbringing contrasts with Libby's Mid-Western American background, is less fully realized and less perceptively and skilfully defined as a personality, but the conflict between

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the two is drawn with insight and understanding, both explicitly and subtly portraying those large differences and obstacles which simplicity and loving-kindness might have minimized, and the small hostilities which grew so enormous in the atmosphere of embattled pride and possessiveness.

Miss Sampson is a young writer of undeniable talent. Her observation is sensive and acute, her style accomplished and lucid. She has written a first novel of exceptional merit.

—SARA HENDERSON HAY.

SEARCH FOR A HERO. By Thomas Hal Phillips. Rinehart. $3. Don Meadows was nineteen during the First World War. His twin brothers, Wallace and William, were twenty but all three would graduate from high school that spring. Don, a cut above the rest of the family, suffered the sense of guilt and aloneness which most boys of that type do. His family, living in a small Mississippi town, were easy-going, ignorant, and almost shiftless. His mother, a garrulous, futile woman, loved Don but had no conception of his ability. His father, a boastful weakling, longed to project himself through a son who must be a hero. His lack of moral fiber, his weaknesses, and his shallowness mortified and hurt Don who, in spite of everything, had a protective tenderness towards him. The twins, obvious and extrovert, taunted him with ruthless affection. In none of them could he find that sense of closeness for which he yearned.

Yet to all of them, and to the one girl in the town who was his mental equal, Don longed to be the hero for whom his father searched. He lost that chance when a college offered the twins their tuition for playing football. After a quarrel with his father, and the realization that William was a rival for the girl, Don left town and joined the Navy, still hoping to become a hero. From here the story is the story of thousands of other boys and takes on the significance of a dramatic era.

This is Hal Phillips's best written and most expertly constructed novel. The scenes in the Navy have flavor without filth, an ironic humor without bitterness. His writing is subtle, yet contains none of the mannerisms to which many young writers are prone.

His psychological analysis is keen, yet so very gentle that its strength and beauty may be lost on the careless reader. Here, unfolding as surely and as quietly as a moon-flower blossom, is the story of a youth's maturing and of his tragic disillusionment.

—CHRISTINE NOBLE GOVAN.

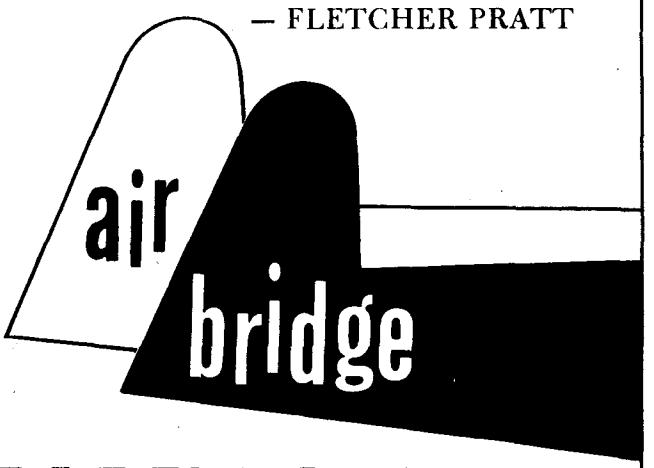
BARBARY HOARD. By John Appleby. Coward-McCann. $2.75. The treasure hunt has moved from Greece, where Mr. Appleby not so long ago had us searching for "the arms of Venus," to North Africa, where we are after an equally fabulous prize. Seems the pirates of the ancient world stored some real loot in that underground cavern back in the Algerian hills. It has been there untouched for centuries. Our band of adventurers involves not only some pretty tough talking gangster types but also the ruthless movie magnate who will sell out anything and anyone to get his hands on the treasure. His lovely daughter, Sarah, is along, too, with her suitor, Martin. Rather predictably, Martin converted before your very eyes from a mild little college professor into as daring a hero as was ever played by Errol Flynn.

Except for that nod to the conventions Mr. Appleby has again provided a pleasantly literate addition to chase fiction.

—EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

"Has a quality of excitement which has been missing from this species of literature since the better days of John Buchan."

— FLETCHER PRATT



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BELLES-LETTRES

(*Continued from page* 18)

prose" of Theodore Dreiser. Among the satirists Mr. Prescott's favorite is J. P. Marquand, as Conrad Richter and A. B. Guthrie are among historical novelists. As a whole, "In My Opinion" was not designed to be in the same category of intensive criticism as, say, John Aldridge's "After the Lost Generation." But Mr. Aldridge's emphasis was on what was, after all, a somewhat narrow group of young writers. If Mr. Prescott's study gives us at times less than we should like in details of analysis and evaluation, it is valuable for its panoramic survey of what is actually going on in contemporary fiction.

Belles-Lettres Notes

THE POETRY OF JOHN DONNE: A Study in Explication. By Doniphan Louthan. Bookman Associates, New York. $3.50. The modern trend of literary criticism has been away from vague, impressionistic appreciation of works of literature toward rigorous, dialectical dissection. As far as method is concerned this trend has effectively underlined the need for coordinated scholarly efforts where the passage of time or deliberate contemporary obscurity have prevented the general reader from understanding the obvious. Doniphan Louthan's study of Donne's poetry is an addition to the numerous Donne critiques which combine purposefully scholarship and ingenuity.

In analyzing a good number of the Donne poems Mr. Louthan also surveys previous criticism (Brooks, Eliot, Empson, Lewis, Ransom, Rugoff, Tuve) and offers some dissenting opinions. Among the valediction poems, "Of Weeping," "Of My Name, in the Window" (a splendid illustration of Donne's concentration of multiple meanings in metaphors and words like "minute" and "trembling" in the poem), and "Forbidden Mourning" are treated as dramatic monologues with Petrarchan attitudes. In "Elegie XIX," "Elegie XVIII," and the Valentine epithalamion Mr. Louthan stresses the sensuous and intellectual nature of the poems rather than sensual intent. Of interest is Mr. Louthan's generalization that Donne's conversion from Roman Catholicism to Anglicanism also saw a gradual change in Donne the voluptuous hedonist (epicurean in this sense) to Donne the voluptuous saint. This is reflected in the transfer of erotic allegiance from the secular to the sacred and a transitional stage of the poems, where there is a combination of secular and sacred metaphors. Poems which exemplify these categories are given a close, Freudian scrutiny by Mr. Louthan, along with some convincing new interpretations.

A READER FOR WRITERS. Edited by William Targ. Hermitage House. $3.50. With this anthology of advice for beginning writers culled from the works of authors who have made the grade in both the classics and the slicks, Hermitage House inaugurates a series of workshop books for professional writers. Those who want to write should subscribe to the golden injunction of Anthony Trollope, Paul Gallico, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Sinclair Lewis which calls for the persistent application of the seat of one's pants to a chair and an industrious use of the quill or typewriter. The exploitation of ideas in the writing of books is illustrated by Edith Wharton's discussion of her "Ethan Frome," Robert Louis Stevenson's analysis of "Treasure Island," James T. Farrell on "Studs Lonigan," and the interesting account by John T. Winterich of Edward Gibbon's "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Matters of style and the role of the editor and the critic are given scrutiny by such able figures as Maxwell E. Perkins, Mark Twain, and Voltaire. Here, then, is an inspirational potpourri of literary advice, some grains of sound, practical suggestions, and good reading even for the non-professional.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: Studies in the History of English Thought and Literature from Bacon to Pope. By Richard Foster Jones and others. Stanford University Press. $7. This impressive volume features a roll call of familiar seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars, such as Marjorie Nicolson, Louis I. Bredvold, E. M. W. Tillyard, Basil Willey, George B. Parks, Herbert Davis, *et al.*, whose articles are written in honor of the sixty-fifth birthday of Richard Foster Jones of Stanford University. In addition to these handsome tributes R. F. Jones is represented by his own writings, which in the past decades have had to fight an uphill battle to establish the validity of his notions that the impact of scientific learning upon seventeenth-century thought was profound and not at all isolated, especially as far as literature is concerned. Appropriately, then, there are reprints of R. F. Jones's "The Background of the Battle of the Books" (in abbreviated form), "Science in the Neo-Classical Age of English Literature," "The Attack on Pulpit Eloquence in the Restoration," and "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century," all with minor corrections.

WORDSWORTH: Centenary Studies. Edited by Gilbert T. Dunklin. Princeton University Press. $3. Those who are eager for judicious appraisal of William Wordsworth will find it worth while to turn to this symposium of essays presented during the recent Wordsworth centenary celebration at Cornell and Princeton universities. From these uniformly excellent essays by Douglas Bush, Frederick A. Pottle, Earl Leslie Griggs, John Crowe Ransome, B. Ifor Evans, Lionel Trilling, and Willard T. Sperry, there emerges a re-evaluation of Wordsworth's poetic achievements, his awareness of contemporary thought, and his current significance. There is a healthy dissension of opinion in these essays, and Douglas Bush's "A Minority Report" suggests that eventually and justifiably only a handful of Wordsworth's poetry will survive in anthologies, scoring Wordsworth's blissful disregard of evil and misery in his contemporary world (a line of thought already advanced by Matthew Arnold and Aldous Huxley). Mr. Ransom emphasizes the poetic innovations of Wordsworth ("one of the giants"), something which Mr. Evans disagrees with, while Mr. Trilling, with his customary circumlocution, comments superbly on Wordsworth's core of Christian belief which paradoxically does not find a modern echo.

—SIEGFRIED MANDEL.

MARCEL PROUST. By Charlotte Haldane. Roy Publishers. $2.50. This slight handbook is more than adequate as an introduction to Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past," one of the greatest twentieth-century novels. All sorts of difficulties lie in the way of introducing that novel: the inextricable autobiography and imagination that constitute its fabric, the ticklish theme of homosexualism which is one of its main threads, its philosophical concern with concepts of time and memory, and its overwhelming sensibility and poetry.

The idea that a writer, like a spider, spins his web out of his own guts is nowhere more true than with Proust; hence Mrs. Haldane spends a good sec-

BOLT

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tion of her book in dealing with the facts of his life, especially his abnormal attachment to his mother; and she uses among other sources the recent revelations in André Maurois's "Proust: Portrait of a Genius." She imperturbably enters into the Sodom and Gomorrah that Proust explored himself, and charts it with civilized candor. In dealing with its philosophical themes—too briefly, perhaps—she simplifies and clarifies instead of obscuring. And to convey its beauty of spirit and style she gives what is most logical—extracts from the novel itself. In general this is too superficial a book for the reader who has already read Proust, but for the prospective one it is an admirable stimulant. And with all the volumes now available in the Modern Library edition Proust is caviar for the general public.

CHRISTOPHER FRY: An Appreciation. By Derek Stanford. The British Book Centre, New York. $2.75. As his subtitle warns, Mr. Stanford appreciates Fry beyond the playwright's most vociferous admirers. He goes about his task systematically—treating Fry's personality, comedies, religious festival plays, tragedies, and other relevant topics like Fry's comic spirit, language, critics, and he ends with "The Triumph of Fry." Although he is candid enough to admit two faults in the plays—their prolixity and sentimentality—he regards them as merely blemishes in an overwhelming genius.

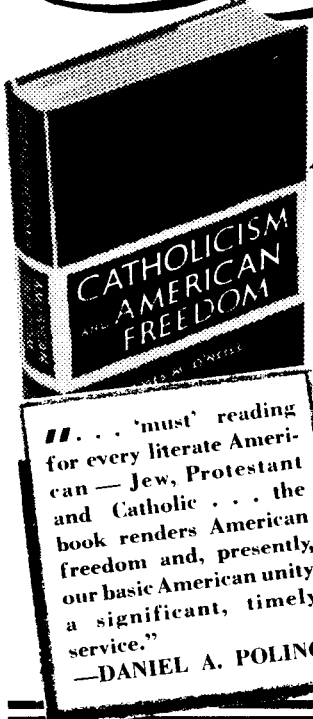
His uncritical appreciation of Fry leads him to two faults of his own. First is his addiction to the windy, pseudo-mystical phrase; an example: "Humor, equally with the tragic, attends the cosmic ritual." That sort of thing may do for verse drama, as Fry has proved, but not for prose commentary. His other fault is a lack of perspective, as when he depreciates Chekov's plays for not being as "classic" as Fry's with their "rounded conclusions and winding-up of interests." In general his incense will smell sweet to those who already worship Fry as the messiah of verse drama; but it will hardly persuade the unbeliever who, like the present reviewer, regards him as little more than a word-juggler of banalities. A good antidote to this school of criticism is T. S. Eliot's concise discussion of "Poetry and Drama."

MRS. EWING, MRS. MOLESWORTH, AND MRS. HODGSON BURNETT. By Marghanita Laski. Oxford University Press. $1.50. In her crisply written little book Miss Laski discusses three writers of children's books. Their works, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, succeeded in delighting—as well as instructing—little Victorian boys and girls on both sides of the Atlantic. As background for the three ladies' careers Miss Laski sketches the growth of the tradition of children's reading in its four forms: the fabulous, the fantastical, the adventurous, and the didactic. It was the last of these genres that the three ladies (and their champion) are concerned with; they applied liberal doses of moral instruction to their tempting and skilful narratives.

Miss Laski's account is consistently enjoyable as reading and as instruction. She is, however, overemphatic on two counts—in the opinion of this reviewer. She assumes that the moral virtues inculcated through a child's reading will help him lead a virtuous life; but, alas, his experience in a world of men who do not inhabit story books probably exerts a far more powerful effect. Then too, she has an exalted opinion of the literary stature of her three ladies. The test of worth for children's books—Alice and Huck pass such a test—is whether they can be reread by adults. None of the books by the three ladies can. As for Mrs. Hodgson Burnett—how many squirming, sweating boys in velvet pants and lace collars have cursed the creator of little Lord Fauntleroy!

—ROBERT HALSBAND.

ANNOUNCING — The important reply to Paul Blanshard's "American Freedom and Catholic Power"



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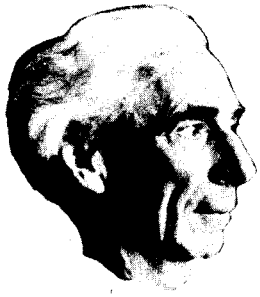

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THE INCREDIBLE ITALIANS

(*Continued from page 12*)

action against him and his rhetoric.

Around the time of the First World War an attempt at obtaining international importance, even using some of the modern methods of propaganda (manifestos, speeches), had been made by F. T. Marinetti with his movement called "futurism," a noisy affair intended to influence not only literature (*e.g.*, with an idea of peoms as *parole in libertà*, "words at liberty," and other such harmless, mildly offensive, and hence catchy bywords: "Let's kill the moonlight . . . The gondola is the rocking-chair of cretins," he would say for instance in public speeches to the Venetians), but also art styles in general and even manners and feelings. The movement had no lasting literary importance or influence. Marinetti's strategies are indicative in connection with some of our earlier remarks: to launch his movement he went to Paris; his first manifestos, in French, were published in a Parisian newspaper (he was bilingual).

After the First World War a less noisy but literarily more significant attempt at capturing international audiences was made by Massimo Bontempelli with his review entitled *900*. During its first years, it was published in French. Such writers as Corrado Alvaro and Alberto Moravia published their first stories there in the late Twenties. Again a tag was possible, the notion of a movement called "900" (standing in Italian for "twentieth century"), though entirely indefinite in its nature, was often repeated as a kind of formula.

A SLOGAN that never caught on, as far as serious literature is concerned, is the "Fascist" slogan; a Fascist literature in Italy to all practical purposes did not exist. To some this may seem a pity, for a shelf of tales about Fascist hierarchs and warriors drawn to heroic scale, or a collection of odes celebrating the dictator could have had some interest as period-pieces or literary monstrosities. The world expected a critical, rebellious, or satiric literature reflecting life under Fascism; for obvious reasons this could not openly come out of Italy as long as the totalitarian regime lasted. Nor did foreign audiences possess sufficient interest and linguistic equipment to ap-

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

LITERARY MONEY

Dr. Dan Laurence, of New York University, asks you to identify the following literary figures whose lives were affected by money, and also the works in which they appear. Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 37.

1. A good-natured young man gives his last two guineas to a highwayman upon discovering that he has been driven to crime by direst poverty.
2. A woman wheedles money from her husband to pay a debt of which he has no knowledge but which was responsible for saving his life.
3. A powerful magnate tells his estranged daughter that his religion is being a millionaire.
4. An old man is forced by his son to choose between the woman they both love and the fortune which has been stolen from him.
5. An army officer causes the death of an old woman and her ward when he attempts to discover a secret formula for gambling success.
6. A successful paint manufacturer goes bankrupt in preference to permitting an unscrupulous partner to involve him in a dishonest business deal.
7. A young lady receives an unexpected inheritance from an uncle whose son has requested the bequest so that she may be free to follow her natural bent.
8. A wealthy man, endowed with every grace and the envy of all the townsfolk, goes home and ends his life.
9. A misanthropic old man hoards his money for fifteen years, only to have it stolen by the son of the town's most influential citizen.
10. A businessman is haled into court to pay a fatal forfeit for having failed to make good on a usurer's loan.

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preciate a certain type of between-the-lines, allegorical, or cryptographic writing which was not uncommon in Italy during the last years of Fascism (*cf.* the already-mentioned "In Sicily," or some of the allegories in Moravia's collection entitled in Italian "I sogni del pigro," not to mention his novel "The Fancy Dress Party," or the definitely cryptographic "Man Is Strong," by Corrado Alvaro).

What readers outside Italy wanted they found in the only Italian writer who had attained a wide American reputation between Pirandello and the present revival of interest, Ignazio Silone. Italians generally, as is well known, find it hard to grant Silone a high place in the history of their recent literature; his character-drawing seems shallow and *passé*, his writing and his dialogue clumsy, his situations scarcely persuasive however noble the spirit that animates them. Nor did success seem to help him; his first novel, "Fontamara," possessed an intensity and a vernacular forcefulness not to be found in the succeeding and more ambitious ones. Since his return to Italy from exile he has written little; he has been most active as a wise and influential member of one branch of the Socialist Party. "A Handful of Blackberries," his only novel to be published here since "The Seed Beneath the Snow" in 1942, will appear this year.

While Italy did not develop a Fascist literature of apologia and celebration, and on the other hand could not develop one of topical satire and invective as long as the dictatorship lasted, we should recall that during those years most of her writers did manage to maintain what seems an essential premise for the existence of any sort of literary civilization: the sense that literature is one of the arts. By art I suppose we all mean not only something emphatically different from documentary information or propaganda but also something which, as a form of knowledge and a record of experience, is infinitely more relevant, subtle, and mature than those forms of communication; and also, incidentally, more entertaining. There is nothing exceptional about such notions yet I suppose Italian writers have in the ordinary practice of their craft implied them as clearly and naturally as anyone working today.

IN maintaining such artistic concepts of literature, the Italian counterparts of the "little magazines" obviously played their role. In the period following the First World War, besides the already mentioned *900*, a considerable importance is attributed to the Roman *La Ronda*, whose function was a sort of "call to order" in the name of classicism against the noisier and shallower varieties of the *avant garde* on the one side and literary commercialism on the other. Some of the principal exponents of a kind of literature which is most difficult to translate (because it depends on an especially intense and subtle use of linguistic effects) emerged from the Roman circle around that review—Emilio Cecchi, Vincenzo Cardarelli, Antonio Baldini, and the most classical of the recently translated novelists, Riccardo Bacchelli. There was formed, in that and other groups, a kind of *avant garde* which had no longer the aimless bombast of the "futurists" but had, instead, quite subdued and exclusive qualities.

This *avant garde*, especially in its poetic products but also in its prose and criticism, was often accused of ivory-tower preciosity, of lack of real content, of obscurity, of hermeticism. While Fascism lasted some of those accusations were more clearly suspect than they are in other countries, for the critic could conceal within them the recommendation that a specific, propagandistic political coloring be adopted by literature. This did not happen to any important extent, but it is only fair to say that in the peculiar situation of Italy the so-called "difficult" writing did contribute to the preservation of certain standards of artistic integrity at a time when language, style (and style is, in the last analysis, the concrete sign of a

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 458

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 458 will be found in the next issue.

HTMHJX WZXLENXL H

XNPDEQZKHLF MUD KFYFE

RZKQX RHNTL MZLU

UZX XNAFEZDE.

—IDUK G. GDTTZKX.

Answer to Crypt No. 457

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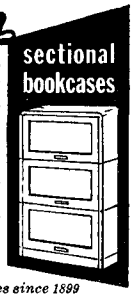

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moral attitude) were daily being degraded by hollow official rhetoric.

Although there is a tendency among the younger postwar writers to disregard their "little magazine" precursors, there can be no doubt about the spiritual and practical role they played in providing, if not a market, at least a meeting place and training ground. Another instance is that of *Solaria* published in the Twenties and Thirties in Florence (Italy, a recently united country, continues its vigorous provincial literary life which is not centralized as is the French), the review which later was transformed into the quarterly *Letteratura* and continues now as *Lettere e Arti*. For example, a writer like Vittorini, often cited among the representatives of the postwar revival, published his first stories in those early magazines, and also his first books, including "In Sicily": the magazines, following somewhat the example of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, had a publishing firm attached, the typical "new writing" firm.

But other publishers as well, even among the most prominent and most commercially organized like Mondadori, had cordial relations with the *avant garde*. Mondadori's book series, *Lo Specchio*, is largely a new writing series. The distinction between the *avant garde* and other current literature is less sharp in Italy, perhaps, than anywhere else. One reason for this, of course, is also that what I call current literature does not have phenomenally high sales either and never represents a big commercial investment. Costs are much lower, too. In such a scantily industrialized literary scene there are no attempts at "producing" a writer the way studio publicity offices create a star. Perhaps the only relevant exception to this rule is Leo Longanesi, an extremely sharp and successful publisher (he published Berto's "The Sky is Red," a best-seller in Italy, and Flaiano's "Time to Kill," here translated as "The Short Cut"). Longanesi is also possibly the closest thing to an "editor," in the U. S. sense, that Italy has. In general, more scope is left to the Italian author to develop, undisturbed, his own intentions; after all *editore* in Italian simply means publisher, while the very concept of "editor" as literary hand and eye helping the author and representing the firm does not really exist.

THE smaller gap between the *avant garde* and current literature facilitates the existence of periodical anthologies of "new writing"; one of them is *Paragone*, published in Florence and resembling in shape the late *Horizon;* another and bigger one, in fact one of really international scope, is the Italo-American *Botteghe Oscure* published in Rome.

If we keep this background in mind in considering the recent translations from the Italian, we see that we have here a number of novelists belonging to a long-neglected literature who not only now arouse a certain amount of curiosity and interest but also occasionally reach the best-seller lists and, in several instances, the inexpensive reprint circuit; and they are all writers whose attitude and formation have been artistic and not primarily commercial. At a time when some entertain doubts about the possibilities of literature's surviving as a popular art, this sign, within its limitations, can be taken as a positive portent.

If we look for the places, and for the training grounds, from which the new Italian writers emerge, there is another area we must watch besides the *avant garde* of the little magazines; in fact, a much wider one. This is comprised of a number of weekly magazines (like *L'Europeo* and *Il Mondo*), and by the *terza pagina*, or "third page," of the daily newspapers, traditionally devoted to literary articles and travel pieces. These institutions may have grown out of necessity; for obviously, Italian writers don't live on their books, and they must depend on newspapers and on periodicals that pay, when they don't depend on film scripts or (what is much rarer than in this country) on teaching. Whether the "third pages" and the weeklies grew out of necessity or out of public demand, or both, their literary consequences cannot be overestimated. The standards of a certain type of journalism are greatly raised. Novelists like Guido Piovene, Enrico Emanuelli, or Moravia himself have traveled broadly, and reported on their experiences in a literary tone which is acceptable to the better category of readers, which in fact contributes to the formation of such a category. Moravia's readers know that the *Corriere della Sera* brings them, along with the daily news, his short stories; and that *L'Europeo* brings them his weekly, extraordinarily intelligent film reviews. Flaiano, the novelist, is an editor of *Il Mondo* and its film critic. The daily *La Stampa* carries articles on American literature by Vittorini, on English literature by Mario Praz. The informality of the connection thus maintained by the writer with the public is indicated by a kind of half-literary, half-personal essay which is practically a specialty of the "third pages"; there are writers who keep a sort of public diary, like the novelist Vitaliano Brancati (whose

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"Don Juan in Sicily" and "The Handsome Antonio" are outstanding seriocomic works of recent years).

Examples could be multiplied at will. The weekly magazines are produced according to a formula that includes the article on current political news along with the short story, the society column (often written with obvious tongue-in-cheek) along with the foreign correspondent's reportage or, say, the "human-interest" record of a current trial. These weekly magazines are in rotogravure, about one third of their space occupied by very large and in varying degrees eye-catching or even "shocking" photographs. *Il Mondo* is the most sedate of them, but it has the same general format; and it is in this magazine that Italians, for instance, can read fairly frequently the prose of the nation's venerable philosopher Benedetto Croce. This seems on the whole a sign of vitality.

These magazines, and the "third pages," are then, in spite of a certain flamboyant appearance, *written* products: the use they make of language, the tradition they belong to, are literary. To give one example, the editor (or to use the Italian terminology, the "director") of the extremely popular *L'Europeo* is Arrigo Benedetti, himself a writer of very subtle works of fiction, a man whose origins are in the literary *avant garde*. Practically all Italian writers are connected with one or another of the weeklies and dailies, or with several of them. Eugenio Montale, regarded by many as the leading Italian poet, and by the philistines as the very essence of the ivory tower, is permanently employed by the daily *Corriere della Sera*. The "third page" breaks through the distinction between *avant garde* and popular writing; and taking an optimistic view of things, one cannot think of a better training ground for a type of writing that is both respectably artistic and capable of reaching a wide audience.

The danger, of course, is that the necessary pursuit of such more practical and ephemeral forms of literature may leave writers little time for the more durable and traditional ones, like the novel. Besides, there is a tendency now in Italy, as everywhere among the younger writers of "highbrow" origin, to take a sort of pride in commercial success; it is a kind of *revanche* against the accusations of ivory-tower obscurity and lack of practical sense which beset them in the past. In Italy this has been more obvious than elsewhere because it has coincided with the restitution of freedom to the writers to handle whatever themes they please, and with the consequent eagerness with which some of them devoted themselves (in stories, films, and most especially in the weekly magazines) to a certain type of "shocking" exposure of realities. The spectacles offered by their age and country were, to be sure, shocking enough and justified them fully; it is regrettable if those manners become mannerisms. But perhaps the "shocking" qualities of certain themes and techniques are the necessary spurious elements without which a literature remains unadvertised and unknown abroad. This is confirmed by the type of success that the recent Italian novels and films have had; Moravia is a serious artist, but there is no doubt that his best-selling success began the day people found out that his eighth novel was the autobiography of a prostitute. There are similar situations in the motion pictures; "Bitter Rice" was advertised, at least in Hollywood, on the basis of the heroine's figure and attire, and it achieved astounding commercial results; while a considerably better film like Germi's "Path of Hope" passed almost unnoticed.

As things now stand, the notion of literature as an art is far from having disappeared in Italy; but it may be seriously threatened by everyday hand-to-mouth necessities. We shall have new novels from Italy if writers have time to write them. As long as they do, it seems fairly certain that such novels will remain the more serious part of their activity. In fact, the echo of whatever international success these writers are having does not seem to represent a danger. In Rome last summer, in the offices of *Il Mondo*, I remember talking one evening with Ennio Flaiano and mentioning several reviews of his book in English which I had read; one of them, in an English magazine, especially enthusiastic. But since it happened that I had flown in from Los Angeles practically the day before, Flaiano seemed more interested to hear about Hollywood than about himself. As for the reviews of his book, he apparently had never seen or heard of them.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Tom Jones," by Fielding. 2. Nora Helmer, in "A Doll's House," by Ibsen. 3. Andrew Undershaft, in "Major Barbara," by Shaw. 4. Harpagon, in "The Miser," by Molière. 5. Hermann, in "The Queen of Spades," by Pushkin. 6. Silas Lapham, in "The Rise of Silas Lapham," by Howells. 7. Isabel Archer, in "The Portrait of a Lady," by Henry James. 8. "Richard Cory," by E. A. Robinson. 9. "Silas Marner," by George Eliot. 10. Antonio, in "The Merchant of Venice," by Shakespeare.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 940

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. German composer and musical director (1873-1916).	86 125 60 111 116
B. Second word of the rallying cry of French Revolution.	19 97 155 4 34 167 118
C. Worthless baubles.	13 104 72 124 49 143 41
D. One of the spirits of Prospero ("The Tempest").	87 3 129 14
E. Negro of a nation of western Nigeria; also their Sudanic language.	74 173 79 165
F. Greek Astarte among Phoenicians and Canaanites.	160 26 141 170 15 123 176 112 18
G. Plover of Europe, Asia, and northern Africa.	10 146 103 68 113 64 57
H. Said; commonly called (French).	7 63 17
I. The aloes of the Bible, now burned as a perfume by Orientals.	109 59 65 84 166 70 37 27
J. To handle hesitatingly.	135 46 163 177 44 5
K. A leading character in Shakespeare's "Henry VIII."	154 43 35 76 174 110 52 147 181
L. A character in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."	140 39 73 88 126
M. To store for preservation or future use (2 wds.).	61 169 171 128 29 122 69
N. Reputedly caricatured as Justice Shallow in Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor."	178 33 81 157

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
O. Editor of U. S. "Saturday Review."	145 58 134 56 82 25 42
P. Author of "Ruy Blas", 1838.	94 117 127 179
Q. Unrestrained.	53 11 28 22 38 159 78
R. Mongol dynasty in China, 1280-1368.	90 101 8 148
S. English-born U. S. painter of famous men, more than 2600 works, among them "Washington Crossing the Delaware", now in Boston Museum of Art.	136 71 107 151 99
T. Hurriedly (Italian music dir.).	131 16 31 66 77 156 115 100 114 133
U. The Mind as reason (philos.).	161 172 23 45
V. Drama published at the age of eighty by author in Word P.	93 138 9 32 2 164 24 106 50 83
W. A dial (astrol.).	168 67 55 95 108 1 149 85 36
X. First name, original masculine star of "South Pacific".	91 47 144 30
Y. A sailor's dance in duple measure.	139 119 75 48 121 40 92 54
Z. Volume of lyric poems by R. L. S. whose title was borrowed from Ben Jonson.	21 12 162 80 102 180 153 158 6 120
Z^1. Mountain peak in SW Colorado, 13,585 feet; or a higher one on Swiss-Italian border.	51 20 150 105 62 182 98 142 175 130
Z^2. Plunges or immerses in any liquid.	132 152 96 137 89 183

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	1 W	2 V	3 D	4 B	5 J	6 Z	■	7 H	8 R	9 V	10 G
11 Q	12 Z	13 C	14 D	■	15 F	16 T	■	17 H	18 F	19 B	■	20 Z^1	21 Z	22 Q	23 U	24 V
25 O	■	26 F	27 I	28 Q	29 M	■	30 X	31 T	■	32 V	33 N	34 B	35 K	36 W	■	37 I
38 Q	39 L	40 Y	41 C	42 O	43 K	44 J	■	45 U	46 J	47 X	48 Y	■	49 C	50 V	51 Z^1	52 K
53 Q	54 Y	55 W	56 O	■	57 G	58 O	59 I	60 A	61 M	62 Z^1	■	63 H	64 G	■	65 I	■
66 T	67 W	68 G	■	69 M	70 I	71 S	■	72 C	73 L	74 E	■	75 Y	76 K	77 T	■	78 Q
79 E	80 Z	81 N	82 O	83 V	84 I	■	85 W	86 A	87 D	88 L	89 Z^2	■	90 R	91 X	92 Y	■
93 V	94 P	95 W	96 Z^2	97 B	98 Z^1	■	99 S	100 T	101 R	102 Z	■	103 G	104 C	105 Z^1	106 V	107 S
108 W	■	109 I	110 K	111 A	■	112 F	113 G	114 T	■	115 T	116 A	117 P	118 B	■	119 Y	120 Z
■	121 Y	122 M	123 F	124 C	125 A	■	126 L	127 P	128 M	129 D	130 Z^1	■	131 T	132 Z^2	■	133 T
134 O	135 J	136 S	■	137 Z^2	138 V	139 Y	140 L	141 F	142 Z^1	143 C	■	144 X	■	145 O	146 G	147 K
148 R	149 W	150 Z^1	■	151 S	152 Z^2	153 Z	154 K	■	155 B	156 T	■	157 N	158 Z	159 Q	■	160 F
161 U	162 Z	■	163 J	164 V	165 E	166 I	■	167 B	168 W	169 M	170 F	■	171 M	172 U	173 E	■
174 K	175 Z^1	176 F	■	177 J	178 N	179 P	180 Z	181 K	182 Z^1	183 Z^2	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in, you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 29 of this issue.

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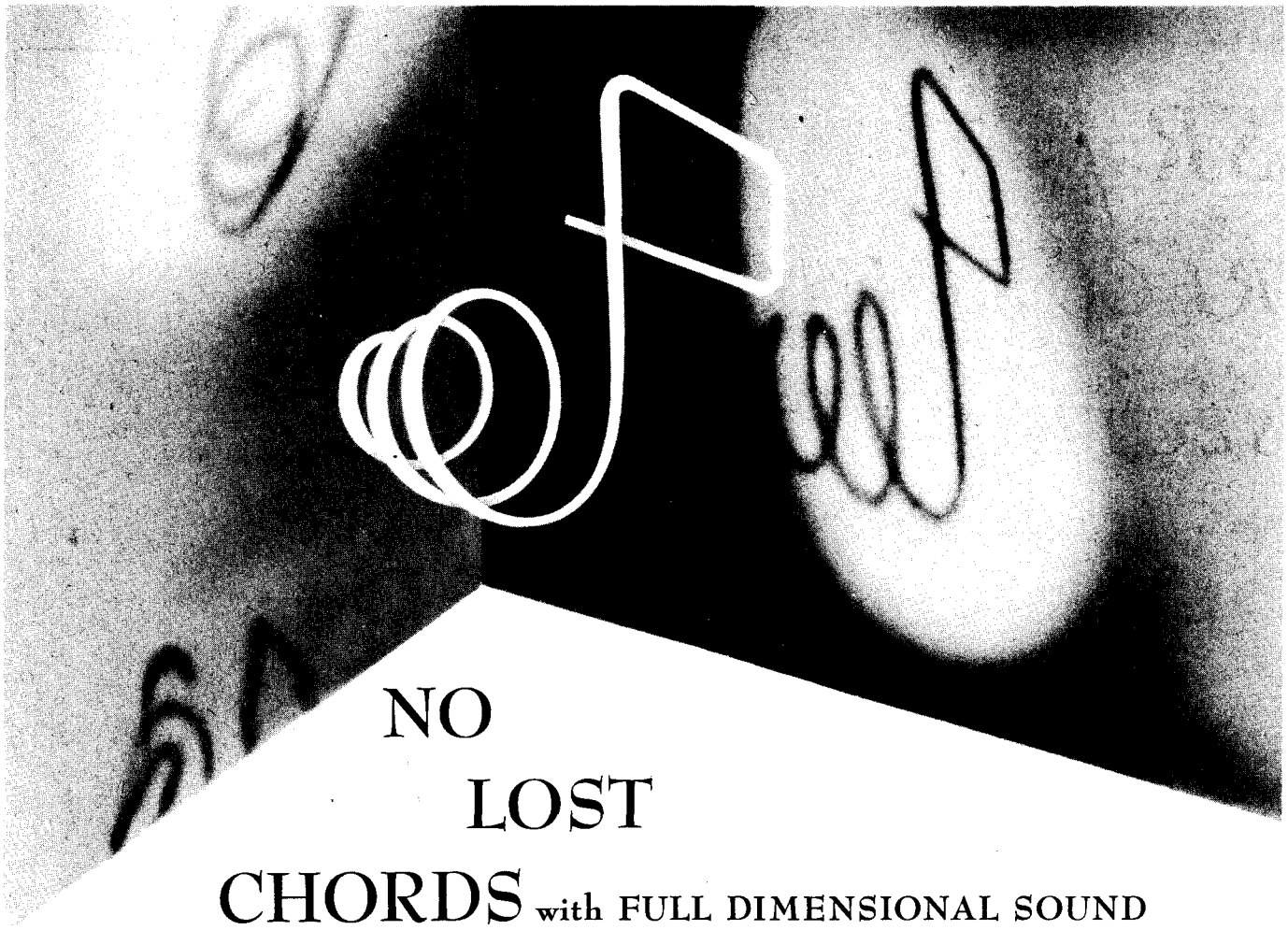
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SR / RECORDINGS SECTION

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A Ten Year Plan for the Metropolitan

IRVING KOLODIN

WHEN Edward Johnson was new at the job of managing the Metropolitan and allusions however remotely Russian were not considered subversive, he was fond of referring to something he called a Five Year Plan. Just what it was designed to accomplish was never clarified, for the war set in as the fourth year ended, and running the Metropolitan thereafter became a holding operation. Some good things were done in all those years and in the five that followed the war, but it was plain that Johnson and his associates did not have the fresh approach to clean house as it needed to be done —after the long, sometimes distinguished, eventually sluggish regime of his predecessor.

It is just as plain from the two seasons in which Rudolf Bing has been at work that he not only has a fresh approach, but a fresh approach to a fresh approach. In other words, he has merged with the needful and necessary job of sweeping away, as fast as possible, the specific eyesores that corrupted the Metropolitan stage for so many years—the faded "Carmen," the threadbare "Aida," the transparent "Rigoletto"—abolition of some of the general habits of thought that had been impeding accomplishment.

Several new departures at once became Standard Operating Practice —splitting the subscription series, addition of Tuesday night to the calendar, reduction of the repertoire from twenty-six operas in the last Johnson season (the number had been dropping steadily all through the decade) to twenty-one or twenty-two, a broader pattern of repetitions with which to "buy time" for the preparation of revivals and new productions. It is only in the second season that the public has reaped an increasing measure of benefit from this new kind of planning, as playable works from the first season have been carried over, giving greater elbow room for more intensive work on operas added or returned to the repertoire in this one.

As the appended compilation on page 44 shows, thirty-six works have been given in the two seasons, with nine given in both years. As of 1951-52, with the addition of "Figaro" and "Salome," which have been well done for years at the Metropolitan, and the retention of "Butterfly," "Trovatore," "Meistersinger," and "Götterdämmerung," which also fare well with appropriate casting, the percentage of works maintained at an acceptable standard, or better, is higher than it has been at the Metropolitan for twenty years.

Strong revivals of "Elektra," "Otello," and "Alcestis" have contributed to this, likewise the newly produced "Don Carlo," "Cav." and "Pag.," "Aida," "Carmen," "Fledermaus," "Rigoletto," and "Cosi." On the fringe of acceptability and sometimes dipping sharply below are "Bohème," "La Traviata," "Manon," "Lucia," and the Englished "Gianni Schicchi." This, certainly, is a shorter list of stragglers than the morning report has shown for a decade anyway.

In the midst of recognizing the fresh approach, it is well to recognize also that Bing has rewritten the book on some hallowed Metropolitan concepts. One, financial, was the thinking that opera should pay for itself, or lose the least sum consistent with a kind of austerity diet on artistic values. The other—and no less important in the kind of results achieved—was the thinking that an opera season was no opera season without six, seven, eight, or nine works of Wagner. This year there will be only three, with a *total* of performances less than either "Carmen" or "Die Fledermaus."

I don't doubt that some segment of the Metropolitan's public finds this an evasion of responsibility, and it cer-

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tainly makes for a lightening of the load on everybody concerned—management, singers, orchestra, etc. But if it justifies itself in the *general* improvement of virtually everything else, perhaps it should have been done long ago—against habit, tradition, and all local concepts of propriety.

Assuming that the cost of paying the more melodious piper will not be deemed excessive by those who have the onerous job of raising the cash—last year's loss was $462,491, and this year's will probably be greater, due in part to the "Fledermaus" tour—it seems to me the time has come to implement Johnson's idea of a Five Year Plan with an even more forward-looking one projected ten years into the future. This would embody three basic propositions:

I. Extension of Bing's contract for a substantial tenure, say five more years, to recognize his competence in the job, and to permit him further latitude for constructive planning.

II. Completion of fund-raising for the $1,200,000 needed to secure an option on the Columbus Circle site offered at favorable terms by the N. Y. Port Authority. At the last report (January) $900,000 had been pledged.

III. Large-scale planning to raise the very considerable sum—$15,000,000 anyway—to build a modern and usuable Music Center on the site. This would doubtless involve community assistance, coordinated cooperation of business, industry, unions, etc.

To me, the three moves are the "left, right, left" movement of the dials to provide an "open sesame" to the Metropolitan's operatic future—which means swinging wide the door to a brighter prospect for opera, nation-wide. For there can be no conceivable doubt that the Metropolitan sets the standard for operatic values all over the land, via radio, tours, and eventually television. Indeed, with its policy of multi-lingual performance, it stands alone in the world.

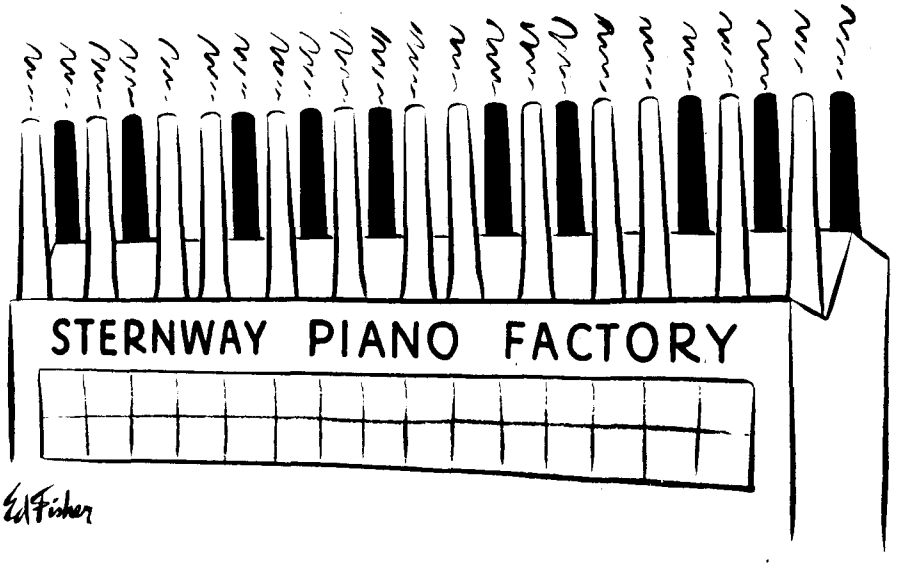
With the financial aspects of this three-way problem I have no immediate concern—save to wish well those who have the mammoth task of dealing with it. The artistic evolution is another matter. And evolution it has to be, whether you are one of those who regrets that the Met doesn't give enough Wagner, enough French repertoire, or novelties. Any of these are valid objections to the season just passed. To translate them into criticisms, one should look for causes as well as results. To lump all the shortcomings under the general heading "box-office attitude" or "commercialism" is faintly absurd when the list under discussion includes "Otello," "Cosi," "Elektra," "Alcestis," "Salome," "Figaro," and "Don Carlo," none of which could be fairly called "ump-pah" operas.

The Met's storehouse is full—if they have not been discarded as trash—of costly "novelties" that were played for a season and abandoned. Meanwhile, the works given most often deteriorated shamefully. The real "novelty" of the Bing repertory is a stage dressed, in increasing numbers, with new productions of standard works that can be played season in and season out. Perhaps there are not as many as we'd like, or just the ones we'd prefer, but the prospect before us is brighter, certainly, than at any time in years. As one who knows the choices that existed, I can attest that it took more determination to set a straight course toward a definite objective than to trim sails to meet all possible winds. Or, to vary the metaphor, the firm foundation must precede the elaborate superstructure.

BING needs neither apology nor defense for what he has done so far: only evaluation. His work speaks for itself in the brighter tone, the stronger morale, the more even level of accomplishment, day in, day out. But an understanding of the problem that existed can contribute to an appraisal of the direction in which he is moving, and what it portends for the future. On the one hand, it consisted of physical regeneration of a shabby, down at the heels *mise-en-scène* that scarcely could be called decor; on the other, the restitution to order, in dramatic terms, of a stage that had long had no organized action, proper supervision, or acting styles. I don't go along with everything done by Miss Webster, and Messrs. Kanin, Guthrie, Lunt, and Graf; but it is refreshing to know, at least, that responsibility exists for what is done, good or bad, that qualified people have been given a job and the minimum, if not ideal, time in which to do it. Likewise, translating time into money, the work of scenic design divided among Gerard, Berman, Armistead, and Jones-Elson.

So much is past. What of the future? Assuming that Point I of the three-part plan is acted upon, thinking should reasonably go in two dimensions: immediate and long range. That is, the work of revising the basic repertory should go on without over-commitment against the day when a new theatre, with new scenic problems, comes into existence. Here the guiding principal should be the *inverse* of the one that obtained in the Twenties—and left its mark for all the years since—in which scenic revision was *put off* because a new theatre was promised.

It seems to me that the basic repertory—Verdi, Puccini, Mozart, Wagner, Gounod, Massenet, Donizetti, Strauss (R and J)—can be brought to a common standard of, let us say, non-ugliness over this ten-year span without committing vast sums in settings that would be worthless in a new theatre. "Flimsy" and "cheap" have been among the adjectives of objection to the recent revisions of "Aida" and "Carmen," objections particularly prevalent among those who wonder why the Met loses so much money (more substantial construction would obviously run up the deficit). But let



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The Bing Balance Sheet

New Productions of Two Seasons

1950-51	*1951-52*
"Don Carlo"	"Aida"
"Flying Dutchman"	"Rigoletto"
"Fledermaus"	"Cosi fan tutte"
"Cav.-Pag."	"Carmen"

Works continuously in the repertory which remain musically superior

"Figaro"	"Salome"	"Madama Butterfly"
"Il Trovatore"	"Götterdämmerung"	"Meistersinger"

Works restored with credit (old productions)

"Elektra"	"Alcestis"	"Otello"

Combination of these in 1951-52 list

"Don Carlo"	"Cosi fan tutte"	"Otello"
"Fledermaus"	"Carmen"	"Alcestis"
"Aida"	"Nozze di Figaro"	"Madama Butterfly"
"Rigoletto"	"Salome"	"Il Trovatore"
"Cav.-Pag"	"Elektra"	"Götterdämmerung"
	"Meistersinger"	

Works sub-standard as of 1951-52 (Scenically and/or musically)

"La Bohème"	"Manon"	"Lucia"
"La Traviata"	"Gianni Schicchi"	"Parsifal"

Works given in 1950-51 only: "Fidelio," "Faust," "Don Giovanni," "Magic Flute," "Manon Lescaut," "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "Der Rosenkavalier," "Flying Dutchman," "Tristan und Isolde," "Rheingold," "Walküre," and "Siegfried." Also Verdi's "Manzoni Requiem."

it be recognized also that they are clean, bright, and attractive.

Assuming that long-term planning is instituted, the same kind of "flimsy" and "cheap" but bright and attractive attention for "Bohème" and "Traviata," "Tosca" and "Faust," "Falstaff" and "Tristan," "Boris" and "Pelléas," etc., would be an enormous evidence of good faith between now and 1962. When and/or if thinking toward a new theatre becomes crystalized in that time, appropriate revision of policy—such as tapering off on investment in new productions—could be instituted. The fact remains that the Metropolitan will continue to tour, whether it has a new home base or not. It is more likely that productions for the *present* house will remain more adaptable to the many theatres on the road than those constructed for a new one. Thus, the investment will be returned in one way or another.

What about novelties? As dull a canard as the one about "box-office" repertory is the one that asserts Bing's disinterest in new works or their propagation. One phase of the problem may be illuminated by a single incident. Even before he became director, Bing sought out Aaron Copland to write a work to be given in his second (the present) season. The subject under consideration was Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," to which, as it happened, the dramatist had long before given the composer clear *cachet* for a musical treatment. After discussion and deliberation, Copland decided the house was too big for a work on this theme.

That is one problem, and a highly pertinent one. It also propounds the question: Who *is* writing works sizable enough to fit the Met's stage, proscenium, and auditorium? To say that "Figaro," "Carmen," "Traviata," "Cosi," etc., were not written for a theatre of such size is to dodge the issue. These works, because of intrinsic musical value, survive the cruel disadvantage of unfavorable surroundings. Few of the provocative works recently given in New York—such as Menotti's "The Consul," Blitzstein's "Regina," or Thomson's "The Mother of Us All"—could stand up to this test.

That is an opinion only, neither dogmatic nor inflexible. In the interests of proving a point, it might be desirable to risk one of them or one like them ("Porgy and Bess," perhaps, as the musically strongest) to see whether the objection is valid. Certainly, any worthwhile Ten Year Plan should include novelties as a matter of course, where found and when financially feasible. Fundamental interest, of course, would determine whether it was Stravinsky's "Rake's Progress" (already announced for next year), Strauss's swan song, "Danäe," a work by a native composer, or one by Hindemith, Benjamin Britten, Milhaud, Dallapiccola, Egk, or whoever.

All of the foregoing has to do with the larger issues of over-all policy, extended planning, ultimate direction, and objectives. What about the smaller, more specific details of personnel and performers, individual level of artists imported to replace past favorites. How do they stack up, measure against, conform to, standards of the past?

THE basic company, of course, is Johnson's. Save for a few such as Flagstad and Pons, who were on the scene when he took over, the present stand-bys are his gambles—Albanese, Conner, Kirsten, Milanov, Munsel, Resnik, Sayão, Steber, Traubel, Varnay, Votipka, and Welitch; Harshaw, Lipton, Madeira, Stevens, Thebom; Baum, Bjoerling, Conley, Darcy, De Paolis, Di Stefano, Hayward, Kullmann, Peerce, Sullivan, Svanholm, Tagliavini, Tucker, Vinay; Brownlee, Cehanovsky, Guarrera, Harvuot, Hawkins, Merrill, Schoeffler, Valdengo, Valentino, Warren; Alvary, Baccaloni, Ernster, Hines, Moscona, Pechner, Vichegenov—all now come to recognition as reliable artists. To them Bing has added such as De los Angeles, Gueden, Rigal; Barbieri, Hoengen, Nikolaidi, Wegner; Del Monaco, Prandelli; Capecchi, Hotter, London, Silveri, Pernestorfer, Scott, and Siepi, who are certainly as good as their immediate predecessors in similar roles, in several instances better. Such younger talents as those of Peters, Rivera, Miller, Amara, Roggero, and Warner have been handled on the whole discreetly.

There remain more than a few European singers of quality one would like to hear at the Metropolitan—Renata Tebaldi, Sena Jurinac, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, Irmgard Seefried, Erich Kunz, Ludwig Weber, Martha Mödl, Maria Callas are widely celebrated names that come to mind, and there must be many younger artists ready for the export market—while some of the present roster hang on

(*Continued on page* 57)

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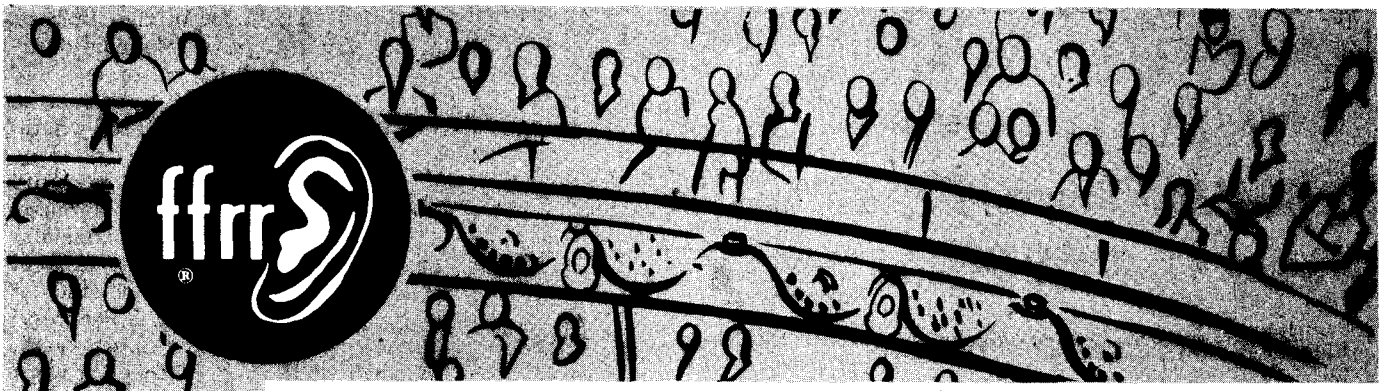

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Fritz Stiedry—From Mahler to the Met

CÉSAR SAERCHINGER

—*Drawing by Eugene Spirro.*

Fritz Stiedry—"master of nuance."

THE truly sensational success of "Cosi fan tutte," after twenty-three years of neglect by the Met, caused some people to ponder the proverbial fickleness of the public and to question the judgment of operatic impresarios. For not only was this Mozart masterpiece not considered good box-office here, but it was a problem child in European opera houses throughout the nineteenth century and after. The most valiant and sometimes grotesque attempts to "improve" it (such as fitting a completely different plot to the music) failed to rescue it from near-oblivion.

The critics, almost with one accord, have given the major credit for its present triumph to Mr. Lunt, that highly gifted actor-producer, who staged the opera in a charmingly stylized manner, with the emphasis on visual appeal, rhythmic gesture, and intelligibility of the text. But Mr. Lunt would be the first to point out that "Cosi fan tutte" is a *musical* masterpiece, that its very life and soul are in the music—a score so beautiful that 150 years of maltreatment and misunderstanding have not dimmed its radiance. That being so, its present appeal would seem to have something to do with the way that music is performed.

And this brings up the important fact that the conductor and inspirer of this year's "Cosi" is that curiously shy, sensitive, but determined musician, Fritz Stiedry, who has dedicated a major part of his long and studious life to the rehabilitation of Mozart in European theatres, from Vienna and Berlin to Moscow and Leningrad. It was he who conducted this and other Mozart operas at the Berlin Municipal Opera some twenty years ago—with similarly gratifying success. The stage director on that occasion was Carl Ebert and the administrative manager Rudolf Bing, the two men who later carried the torch of operatic reform to Glyndebourne and Edinburgh. This team, together with an imaginative designer called Caspar Neher, was responsible for the "new," esthetically integrated manner of performing opera in Berlin.

Stiedry has been a fanatical Mozart lover ever since, as a Vienna schoolboy, he did his musical "homework" in the gallery of the Vienna Opera, while Gustav Mahler conducted. (Once he actually smuggled himself into the orchestra as an alleged triangle player—with interesting results.) When he left the Vienna Conservatory, he became an assistant to Mahler, who in turn sent him to Dresden with a recommendation to Ernst von Schuch, reputedly the best opera conductor of his time. At twenty-five Stiedry began a swift career through the provincial opera houses of Bohemia, Poland, and Germany, and at thirty-one landed the contract which made him a "first conductor" at the Royal (later State) Opera of Berlin.

While obliged to conduct the entire operatic repertoire from Wagner and Verdi to Offenbach and Bizet, the fifty-odd volumes of Mozart's Collected Works have been his New Testament throughout his life (those of Bach being the Old). To conduct the Mozart operas in accordance with a certain ideal has been one of his two chief ambitions. The other is to perform all the choral cantatas of Bach. Despite this, however, he harbors a deep affection for Verdi, and he is certainly one of the most sensitive interpreters of Wagner's "Ring."

STIEDRY's special flair for Verdi dates from his second Viennese period, when for two years he was the artistic director of the People's Opera (then, incidentally, close to financial collapse). His friend Franz Werfel was at that time completing his now famous "Verdi" novel, and asked Stiedry to check the musical facts. Always a student and a voracious reader, he became interested in Verdi's letters and the master's preoccupation with certain of his lesser-known works. This led him to the almost forgotten treasures in the earlier Verdi scores—in "I Lombardi," "Simone Boccanegra," "Don Carlo," "Forza del Destino," and the two versions of "Macbeth." All but one of these operas he produced, in new German translations by Werfel, either in Vienna or Berlin, and they have enriched the repertoire ever since. Aside from these rediscoveries, Stiedry has a special preference for "Trovatore," "Falstaff," and, of course, "Otello," which he has just directed at the Met.

Stiedry's great chance for pioneer work came when he succeeded Bruno Walter as chief conductor of the Berlin Municipal Opera (in 1929). This formerly "suburban" theatre in the west of Berlin had recently been reconstructed by the city, and endowed with an annual subvention of over one million dollars—all with the obvious intention of challenging the supremacy of the excellent but highly traditional State Opera. The Municipal Opera was tricked out with the latest machinery, lighting, and other equipment known to stagecraft. The ideas that animated the new regime were based on the principle that opera is made to be seen as well as heard; and that the words must be understood. In short, it must be "good theatre" and the singers must look and act their parts.

Stiedry and his colleagues seemed too absorbed by their work to know what was happening—till Hitler suddenly came to power in 1933. On March 7, he conducted a special performance of "The Flying Dutchman." Goering, Goebbels, and other Nazi bigshots sat behind him in menacing silence throughout a demonstrative storm of applause. Shortly after, a squad of S.S. men stomped into the theatre and literally removed Ebert and Stiedry from their offices—by the scruff of their necks. It was the end of a four-year artistic idyll, and a farewell to Mozart and Verdi done to the epicure's taste. Abandoning most of his possessions, including his collection of some 5,000 books, Stiedry took an early train for his native Vienna.

At this psychological moment a telegram arrived from Leningrad—of all places—offering him the post of artistic director of the Leningrad

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Philharmonic Orchestra, with seven months' service and an acceptable amount of American dollars per year. Stiedry had come to know Soviet Russia during the free-lancing years which filled out the hiatus between his permanent engagements in Vienna and Berlin. He had made seven trips to Russia altogether, conducting orchestras in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, and other cities at a time when the country was alive with Western technicians and "specialists." The regime was then going in for *Kulturno* in a big way, and intellectual freedom in the arts and sciences had not been curtailed as yet.

The very fact that the Russians were willing to place a notorious individualist and enemy of all "isms" like Stiedry in an important post seemed to portend a liberal policy so far as music was concerned. And all his previous experiences supported this view. He had been completely free to conduct whatever he liked—all the Western classics, moderns like Schoenberg and Hindemith, Stravinsky and Prokofiev—none of whom were as yet on the *index expurgatorius* of the Communist creed.

One of his earliest Russian encounters, back in 1925, had been with two starry-eyed youngsters who came into the artists' room and demanded to know where he stood on the question of Bruckner. The answer being satisfactory, he was promptly inducted as a member of an esoteric group known as the Bruckner and Mahler Society of Leningrad. One of the two youngsters was Dimitri Shostakovich, then nineteen, who was to become Stiedry's constant companion whenever he was in Leningrad—throughout the years of the young composer's rise to fame.

The return to Leningrad after his energetic ouster by the Nazis saved Stiedry's career, and possibly his life. It also proved to be his greatest opportunity, thus far, to conduct his symphonic favorites, from Bach to Schoenberg, with virtually unlimited rehearsal time (since money seemed to be no object). But his reputation as a rejuvenator of operatic classics had preceded him, and he was therefore "drafted" for new productions in Leningrad and Moscow. He restored to the repertoire such distinctly non-Marxist pieces as "Falstaff," "The Abduction from the Seraglio," and "The Bartered Bride," all produced in the neo-realistic, stylistically integrated manner of the modern school, with the help of a gifted Stanislavsky pupil and the blessings of Stanislavsky himself.

In Leningrad, after months of prep-

(*Continued on page 64*)

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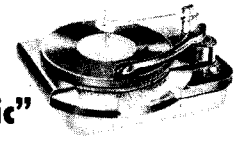

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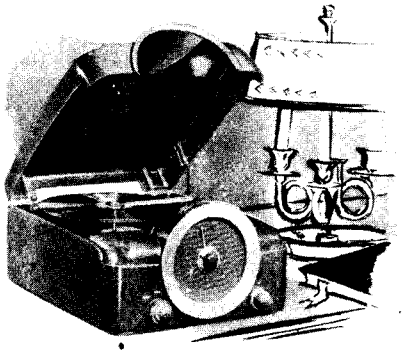

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King David & Reforestation

ARTHUR BERGER

WE HAVE come a long way from the time when our top conductors vied for first American performance rights of a new large work of Shostakovich. Local competition over his music these days is a mere shadow of its former self, but the tradition somehow prevails, and Vanguard and Colosseum have each rushed to be first on the domestic market with a recording of a Russian performance of the oratorio of 1949, "Song of the Forests," conducted by Eugene Mavrinsky. Even this much attention is far more than the work merits, and it seems quite out of proportion when we think that one of the monuments of twentieth-century choral music, Honegger's "King David," has had to wait since 1921 until now for its first complete recording (Westminster set WAL 204, $11.90). On the other hand, it is comforting to observe how untarnished Honegger's inspirations remain after all these years, how much potency the work holds to maintain a unique position for many decades to come. Any attention the Shostakovich work is to get, it better get right now before the slight interest it has for us is completely dissipated. That interest lies purely in the documentary evidence of how the Soviet bureaucracy has finally succeeded in crushing one of its brightest talents. Vanguard (VRS 422, $5.95), which claims exclusive rights to issue the recording in our hemisphere, has gone to considerable pains to improve upon the defective master tapes that provide this evidence. But Colosseum (LP 118, $5.45), which also got hold of a set of tapes somehow, serves us just as well, for it would take more than opulence of recording to compensate for the naivete and poverty of ideas of the score.

Having had several warnings, Shostakovich has finally accepted the Soviet dictum of art as something at the level of journalism, something as topical and uncomplicated as the morning paper, to be quickly scanned and left on the subway bench on your way to work. The subject of the report is Soviet reforestation. As content, this eminently satisfied the demands for "realism" and restored him to favor. The music of this oratorio, owing to the nature of the art, is incapable of approaching the realistic matter as directly as its text. Music may best comply with the Soviet prescription by merely re-echoing other music which has, through familiarity, become most closely associated with daily life. Its domain becomes not simply folk song, but cold left-overs from the simplest, most popular repertoire of composers from Beethoven to Tchaikovsky and Moussorgsky. If Shostakovich has never been one of my favorites, he was a personality who started out with promise and, though his judgment and taste were often faulty, made some attempt to capture our imagination. "Song of the Forest" dispenses with any such attempt, and is completely apathetic to the challenge of the creative act.

The music of "King David" was written for a dramatic presentation. In the form of a "symphonic psalm" in which it survives it bears the scars of having been severed from its original context. The narration is at best an expedient to replace the intervening stage action and the effect of short sections connected by this spoken commentary is often episodic. The problem of a speaker in an oratorio form was much more successfully solved some years later by Stravinsky in "Perséphone." But despite these considerations, "King David" is an important and rewarding work. The profile of the melodic inspirations, the conciseness of the writing represent its composer at his best. Its influence has been enormous on subsequent composers for theatre, movies, and chorus. In fact, it is hard to disengage oneself from the associations of the many less exalted uses to which Honegger's fanfares and Biblical style have been put during the last twenty-five years.

The performance, under the composer's direction, is adequate to convey the necessary contrasts and grandeur for a Biblical tale unfolding in the form of a tableau. For my taste there is too much reverberation in the recording, and the speaking voice of Jean Hervé is unsympathetic to my ears and unctuous at the climaxes. The participants are otherwise first class, including Janine Micheau, soprano; Janine Collard, contralto; Pierre Mulet, tenor; the Elizabeth Brasseur Chorus, and the Orchestre de la Radiodiffusion Française. If the recording as a whole is not equally first class, it is still a "must" for anyone who collects recordings of contemporary music, and it belongs in the more general libraries of discriminating collectors, too. It is an important step in filling the deplorable gap in contemporary choral music on records. We understand from Columbia that Stravinsky's "Oedipus Rex" is on its way. Let us hope that "Perséphone" will soon follow and that Milhaud's "Oresteia" will soon find its way onto LP.

I SHOULD like to draw attention to two worthwhile releases that are likely to be buried under the weight of so many more touted items—Elliot Carter's Sonata for Cello and Piano and his Sonata for Piano (American Recording Society LP 25, $5.95) and piano music of Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Poulenc, played by Elly Kassman (Griffon LP 1003, $4.85). Carter is writing some of the most adult and substantial music that is being written anywhere nowadays. He achieves weight without grandiosity. His mind has been alert to all that is worthwhile in tradition, and he has created an original and impressive idiom out of sources as widely dissimilar as Copland, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg. The sense of differentiation is more highly developed in the cello work of 1948 than in the piano sonata of 1946. But the earlier work remains, nonetheless, one of the most distinguished American achievements for the keyboard. Beveridge Webster, pianist, Bernard Greenhouse, cellist, and his accompanist, Anthony Makas, do an extraordinary job of solving the knotty performance problems of both works.

The Kassman LP is especially notable for reviving Poulenc's charming and refreshing little Suite of 1920 in a beautifully articulated reading that realizes thoroughly the composer's intention. Hindemith's Second Sonata, the loveliest of his set of three, also, like the Poulenc, makes an auspicious recording debut. Stravinsky's sonata and etudes are acoustically not as well reproduced, but they compare favorably with previous recordings.

Though Schoenberg's inspired piano works remain deplorably neglected, his dreary Variations for Organ now enjoy the luxury of a second LP, with Clarence Watters as the organist on this occasion (Classic LP 1004, $5.95). Three Messiaen pieces on the reverse side may have their use in the church, but they are of no musical interest. David Oistrakh's masterly rendition of Khachaturian's thoroughly commonplace violin concerto has been made available on a domestic label (Colosseum X-001, $4.85).

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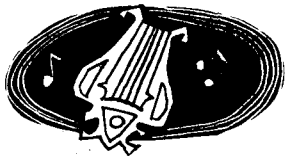
Albanese with Stokowski

VILLA-LOBOS: *"Bachianas Brasileiras," No. 5. Licia Albanese, soprano, with Leopold Stokowski and his orchestra;* also TCHAIKOVSKY: *"Letter Scene" ("Eugene Onegin"). The same.* (RCA Victor LM 142, $4.67.)

WHOEVER conceived this combination of phonographic values merits respect for a keen appreciation of not only what, but who and how. In each instance, the material vis-à-vis the performers is provocative. Musical virtue is respected by the pairing of a virtuoso singer and a conductor qualified for the special problems of the particular works. The text in both instances is the original (Portuguese and Russian), and the engineering has been well done.

As everybody more than eight years old knows, "the" version of this enchanting Villa-Lobos music is the one of Bidu Sayão, with the composer conducting. It would be unintelligent to undertake a duplication without making it in some way different and possibly superior. Stokowski and Albanese cannot be convicted of unintelligence. It is different in adding to the beloved "Aria," sung by Sayão, the animated "Dansa," which she doesn't sing. It is superior in definition of sound and projection of values not possible when the pioneer Columbia disc was made several years ago. I don't think Albanese sings as well as Sayão (c. 1944), but to admit that the difference, if any, is narrow is to put her in a category of accomplishment rare indeed.

As the Villa-Lobos exposes one new facet of Albanese's ability, so the Tchaikovsky does another. It seems to me a little calculated and lacking impulsiveness for this episode, but it is superbly vocalized, inflected by Stokowski's influence to a supple likeness of the curves he imposed, in days past, on the "Romeo and Juliet" Overture or certain phrases in the Fifth Symphony. All the orchestral details are touched in with a masterly feeling for emphasis and line. Considering the quality of the recording, this is full value indeed.



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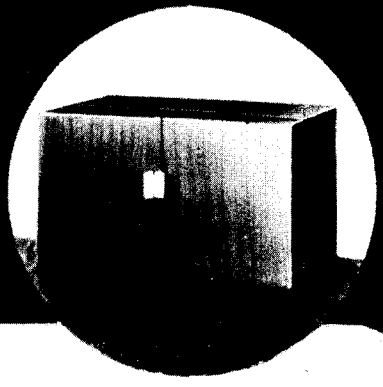

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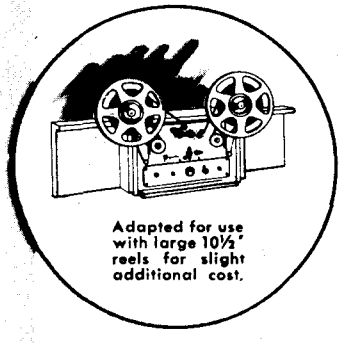

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Recordings in Review

Unique "Bohème"

PUCCINI: *"La Bohème." Jan Peerce, Licia Albanese, Anne McKnight, Francesco Valentino, Nicola Moscona, and Salvatore Baccaloni, with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini.* (RCA Victor LM 6006, $11.44).

IT IS barely weeks more than six years since the Toscanini broadcasts of February 3 and 10, 1946, gave a world of listeners a powerful new idea of the music in this much-played, much-misplayed score. Intermittently since, in listening to other performances and other recordings, one has thought back to this experience and reflected: "Well, it just wasn't that good; it couldn't have been."

Now we have it to hear and rehear and evaluate again; and the conclusion is that it was every bit as good as memory proclaimed, in ways and details that have grown dim in an impression of the total. The motor force, propulsive and unrelenting from first to last, is, of course, Toscanini's—mobile, alert, ever urgent. And yet what tenderness, what drama, what variety is compressed into the 101 minutes it takes him to play the score! There was some impression at the time that it raced, that it was pressed forward to comply with the two hours of allotted broadcast time. No such impression persists from the recording: it is merely by contrast with the usual—or even unusual—dilatory one in the theatre that this one stands out as the direct and compelling thing it is.

One is reminded anew, also, how the cast rose to the occasion, for one had somewhat forgotten how Jan Peerce quite outdid himself to sing a Rodolfo not only vocally fervent, but of an artistic sincerity and dramatic dignity that can well stand as the summit of his career. This is vocalism and emotional purpose (the first act especially, and the final scene) that any man should be proud to claim for his own. Licia Albanese is hardly second to him; but the way the opera is conducted it is the men who have the heaviest responsibilities to discharge, and all come through splendidly. For Valentino (Marcello) and Cehanovsky (Schaunard) the microphone is a magnifying glass that enhances smallish voices somewhat dwarfed by the Metropolitan, while revealing no artistic flaws. Baccaloni, Moscona, and McKnight each perform in the spirit of the occasion.

All this would be gratifying in any circumstances, but the happy ones are that this is a far more satisfactory reproduction than the "Traviata," with less of the stifling "8H sound" than most recordings out of that studio. There is some dryness at the very beginning, but it does not offend at any point. Midway in Side 3 the sound gets fuzzy and a little dull—due, perhaps, to some line deficiencies. But it is altogether on a much higher level of fidelity than one had dared anticipate, and the hypnosis the performance exerted on the audience is eloquently indicated by the absence of coughs, snorts, or shufflings.

Along with the riches of thought and emotion the performance reveals, it should stand for future generations as an uncommonly intimate insight into the way Toscanini works. His favorite exhortation, "cantare, cantare" ("sing, sing"), is acutely reflected in the solos that become duos, the duets that become trios, as his own thick baritone can be heard in unconscious evocation of the music's spirit. It's not the prettiest voice in the lot, but more often than not the most eloquent.

The issue is embellished by a handsome brochure, with a new, illuminating translation of the text by Robert Bagar.

Chopin Plus Godowsky

CHOPIN: *Six Etudes, with Godowsky elaborations. David Saperton, piano.* (Command Performance LP 1201, $5.95.) *The same (second series).* (Command Performance LP 1202, $5.95.)

IF THESE records do no more than acquaint the younger generation of pianists and music lovers with the remarkable musical mind of Leopold Godowsky and the prowess of David Saperton, his long-time friend and son-in-law, they will accomplish much. For both are a reminder of days when pianists explored and enriched their craft, rather than merely exploited it. Of present-day performers only Vladimir Horowitz attempts any like feat.

The procedure in both discs is the same: a Chopin etude followed by Godowsky's metamorphosis, in which new technical and musical problems are imposed on the original. In a few instances more than one Godowsky treatment of the same etude is provided. Each disc ends with one of the famous fantasies on Johann Strauss tunes—the first with "Fledermaus," the second with "Artist's Life."

I would not recommend either disc for general enjoyment; the accumulated technical involvement practically defies consecutive listening for purely pleasurable purposes. But for anyone specifically interested in Chopin, in the piano, or in an infinite amount of sensitive exposition of both, Saperton is your man. I hope that these ventures are sufficiently successful to encourage further explorations of the Godowsky literature, especially the Schubert song transcriptions and the remarkable "Passacaglia" on the opening of the "Unfinished" Symphony. For that matter, Saperton's artistry should be commanded on its own, for the Strauss pieces show him in peerless form. Excellent piano tone in both instances.

Antiquity Revisited

BELLINI: *"Casta Diva" ("Norma"), etc. Lilli Lehmann, soprano.* (Eterna LP 463, $5.95.)

CONSIDERING all the attention of late to epoch-making voices, it seemed only a matter of time until someone got around to gathering the Lilli Lehmann repertory and giving us a chance to evaluate together those isolated discs everybody has heard sometime or other, somewhere or other. Now that it has been done, the credit to the great Isolde, Brünnhilde, Violetta, Carmen, Leonora, Donna Anna, Norma, etc., is plainly greater than ever, the praise lavished upon her at the Met in 1885 (and later) obviously merited.

Most of the sides represented in this LP were made when Lehmann was closer to sixty than to fifty, around 1905. Several of them are almost caricatures of recognizable instrumental sound, in which the piano sounds like an out-of-tune harp, the orchestra like a dyspeptic barrel organ, but at no time is the vocal sound, however thin, scratchy or insubstantial, less than astonishing in its clarity, support, and discipline. As for the even musicality exposed, it ranges from excerpts from "Norma" (a truncated "Casta Diva") to "Martern aller arten" in "The Seraglio," from the "Honor" aria in "Don Giovanni" to "Sempre libera" in "La Traviata." For pure virtuosity "Ach, ich liebte" ("Seraglio"), with its repeated flourishes of C-D-E above the staff, is astonishing.

So far as Mozart is concerned in general, I have heard no like blend of authority and vocal command from

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any modern singer, either in person or on records, such as is indicated here. I say "indicated" because it is more than a small feat of the imagination to filter out the scratchy background and enlarge the vocal sound to full human size, but her fluency as well as force are perennial phenomena. At quoted rates for Lilli Lehmann shellacs, the $5.95 rate for this LP is a fantastic bargain.

Tenors Twelve

SCHUBERT: *"Die Schöne Müllerin." Aksel Schiotz, tenor, with Gerald Moore, piano.* (RCA Victor LCT 1048, $5.72.)

MOUSSORGSKY: *Fourteen Songs. Vladimir Rosing, tenor, with Myers Foggin, piano.* (Decca DL 9577, $5.85.)

DONIZETTI: *"Una furtiva lagrima." Ferruccio Tagliavini, tenor, etc.* (RCA Victor LM 1202 $5.72.)

RCA Victor created the category noted above by calling one of its current issues "Ten Tenors—Ten Arias," thus combining on a single LP some of the most mellifluous noises the human throat has produced from McCormack to Lanza. In a spirit of generosity we have added Schiotz and Rosing to the list, to bring the party to an even dozen.

Together Schiotz and Rosing could scarcely produce enough sound to match the feeblest of the big-voiced gentlemen above, but they do quite nicely with what they have. It's an unexpected pleasure to find the Rosing versions of Moussorgsky, for I hadn't known they were forthcoming. As everyone acquainted with the song literature knows, they are classics of their kind, with a word emphasis and dramatic intensity that far exceed Rosing's vocal capacity or the undistinguished reproduction of it. Great interpretative art it remains, nevertheless.

As for Schiotz, this is an expected pleasure, for which I confess some personal responsibility. Depending on the success of this venture, I am told, are the chances of further reissues of Schiotz discs—some of them, in my opinion, even superior to this collection.

In a candid view—and with the second thought that comes from a wider acquaintance with his art than I had when this "Schöne Müllerin" was first discovered—I am inclined to think less of the intrinsic beauty of the voice than I did once. It has certain technical limitations, especially at the top; it is certainly not a golden throat of the Schlusnus sort or Hüsch or, from what I have heard, of the rising Fischer-Dieskau. But there is no question at all of Schiotz's penetration to the inner core of Schubert's setting of the Müller verses, or of his complete identity with the drama of heartbreak it presents. "Ungeduld" has never been sung better, to my hearing, and the three-way vocal characterization—father, girl, lover—contrived for "Am Feierabend" is a matchless bit of dramatic underlining. In sustained mood and realization of the shifting emotions that make this cycle great, Schiotz has a superb coworker in Gerald Moore, today's most distinguished accompanist. The processing is excellent, after the first two or three songs, which are peculiarly dull and unresonant.

One of the fascinations of "Ten Tenors—Ten Arias" is the side-by-side comparison it permits of such voices as Lanza and Gigli, Tagliavini and Di Stefano, Peerce and Bjoerling—James Melton, Svanholm, Caruso, and McCormack are the others. I took a kind of blindfold test in listening to the sequence without peeking at the labels, though well aware of the gentry involved. I had no trouble with the Tagliavini coo, the Gigli gurgle, the Svanholm shout, or the Bjoerling blare, but I do admit to some puzzlement about the singer of "Che gelida manina." "Sounds like a louder Di Stefano," I reasoned, "but when did he let himself get to be such a careless singer?" Well, to make a long tenor short, it turned out to be Lanza. Di Stefano's "E lucevan e stelle" is not at all the best singing I have ever heard him do, but Bjoerling's "Salut demeure" almost is. For arousing reaction, Gigli's "Di quella pira" is a virtual slap in the face, Peerce's "La donna e mobile" a proper instance of that artist's sharp mind and responsive voice at work.

Antonio Janigro—"dexterity and finesse."

After Bjoerling's "Salut demeure" McCormack's "Il mio tesoro" sounded almost the product of a midget throat, but with what artistry is that slender sound spun and threaded through the Mozart pattern! Since this is the third or fourth reissue in the last four years, there is little need any longer for anyone to be ignorant of this masterpiece of vocal art. As cap and climax to the whole is Caruso's "Vesti la giubba," which groans out rather a discordant instrumental echo to the magnificent sounds that had preceded, including those of the fabled Enrico himself. Save for the Gigli all the contemporary recordings are outstandingly good, several of them—such as the Bjoerling—tremendously brilliant.

Whether as a means of entertaining yourself or playing a game with friends, "Ten Tenors—Ten Arias" is a worthy disc. Next we should have one with no names at all on it—and let the first right guesser have custody of the original model of Barraud's "Little Nipper" for one whole year.

Two Kings and a Prince

BOCCHERINI: *Concerto in B flat. Pablo Casals, cello, with orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald;* also BRUCH: *"Kol Nidrei." The same.* (RCA Victor LCT 1028, $5.72.)

BOCCHERINI: *Concerto in B flat. Antonio Janigro, cello, with orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska;* also HAYDN: *Concerto in D. The same.* (Westminster LP 5126, $5.95.)

BLOCH: *"Schelomo." Emanuel Feuermann, cello, with Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski.* (RCA LCT 14, $4.67.)

TO PUT the young, virtually unknown Italian cellist Antonio Janigro (the accent is on the first syllable) into the exalted company of Casals and Feuermann would seem the surest way to muffle his rising career at its outset. However, I have not heard any artist of the postwar period (including Pierre Fournier or the greatly able Paul Tortelier) who combines in equal measure the fastidious workmanship of Casals and Feuermann with the kind of elevated musicianship they practised.

I do not deal with the question of tone, for I have only heard him from these Westminster records, and me-

(*Continued on page* 53)

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Beethoven: Serenade (Opus 25). Julius Baker, flute, Joseph Fuchs, violin, and Lillian Fuchs, viola. Decca DL 9574, $5.95.	Perfection is no mean attribute, whatever the form it takes; and this effort by the Baker-"Fox" ensemble is, of its type, unsurpassable. This applies to both the performance and the processing. On the second side is the C minor String Trio (Opus 9), with Harry Fuchs, cello, joining his more celebrated brother and sister.
Brahms: Concerto in D, Opus 77. Jascha Heifetz, violin, with the Boston Symphony conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. RCA Victor LCT 1043, $5.72.	Transfer of this long-respected performance to LP gives occasion for a revaluation of its musical qualities, and a shift of emphasis from respect to admiration. In terms of sound it compares favorably with much later versions of the same work.
Brahms: Quintet in B minor (Opus 115). Reginald Kell, clarinet, with the Fine Arts Quartet. Decca DL 9532, $5.95.	Kell is doubtless a finer clarinet player now than when he made the previous version of this work with the Busch Quartet, and the Fine Arts is an estimable quartet. However, it doesn't strike me as nearly as personal or atmospheric a performance as its predecessor. There is, after all, quality latent in Adolf Busch which is not easily replaced. Fine sound and balance.
Grieg: Sonatas in C minor (Opus 45) and F (Opus 8). Joseph Fuchs, violin, and Frank Sheridan, piano. Decca DL 9571, $5.85.	Skilfully as this brew is served by the sophisticated Fuchs and Sheridan, it remains a bit sweet and cloying for my taste. What Grieg introduced to alleviate its prettiness hardly convinces any more. High-quality performance, to be sure, and excellent reproduction.
Glazounov: "The Seasons." Roger Désormière conducting the French National Symphony Orchestra. Capitol P 8157, $4.98.	Capable a workman as Désormière is, he cannot invent a substance or charm where the composer neglected to provide it. What we have is a brilliant presentation of rather glossy emptiness, recorded with more fidelity and sound "glamour" than anything previously contrived by Capitol. The first of its FDS (Full Dimensional Sound) series, and thoroughly impressive whether or not one welcomes another catch phrase.
Handel: Sonatas Nos. 13, 14, and 15. Mischa Elman, violin, and Wolfgang Rose, piano. RCA Victor LM 1183, $5.72.	A full measure of the golden Elman tone, but rather less solid assay of the gold in Handel's thought. Well done in its virtuoso style, but there are other and better ways of playing Handel. Fine sound.
Mahler: Early Songs from Rückert, etc. Alfred Poell, baritone, and Anny Felbermayer, soprano, with orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. Vanguard VRS 421, $5.95.	Valuable additions to the Mahler literature, with such previously familiar songs as "Ich atmet' einen linden Duft," "Hans und Grethe," "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen," and "Liebst du um Schönheit" linked to the less known but equally absorbing "Scheiden und Meiden," "Um Mitternacht," "Es sungen drei Engel," etc. Poell's solid abilities are well known, and favorably exhibited here, with the quality level well sustained by Felbermayer's silvery voice and engaging artistry. Conducting and recording are akin to the Prohaska-Vanguard "Knabenwunderhorn."
Mendelssohn: "Songs Without Words." Albert Ferber, piano. London LPS 453, $4.95.	Proficient performance by Ferber, but much less accent and character to such a miniature as the "Tarantelle" (Opus 102, No. 3) or the "Venetian Gondola Song" (Opus 30, No. 6) than was provided by such specialists of old as Cortot or Moiseivitch. Overside are the Schumann "Kinderscenen" similarly well disciplined, but a little perfunctory. Well-managed piano tone.
Mozart: Concerto in D (K.451). Jeannette Haien, piano, with the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales. WCFM LP 101, $4.75.	One of the most ceremonial of Mozart's works for keyboard and orchestra, in a big, rather overproduced recording. The piano is decidedly prominent, the orchestra behind it opaque and indistinct in the tuttis. Stylistically, the manner is correct enough, but rather stodgy, without suitable subtlety or nuance.
Mozart: Concerto in C (K.503). Carl Seeman, piano, with the Munich Philharmonic conducted by Fritz Lehmann. Decca DL 9568, $5.85.	Much more the conversational kind of Mozart concerto than the preceding, rendered with appropriate give and take, though also a little more casually than its wit and high spirits merit. Seeman is a pianist of distinct virtue, whose art would be enhanced by a more sensitive treatment of the orchestral score than Lehmann provides. The "Unser Dummer pöbel meint" variations fill out Side 2. Satisfactory if not outstanding recording.
Mozart: "Posthorn" Serenade. (K.320). Peter Maag conducting the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. London LLP 502, $5.95.	First-class treatment of a work much stronger in character, deeper in expressiveness than was apparent from its previous version, an early Haydn Society issue with Jonathan Sternberg in charge. It is, in thought and scope, quite as "symphonic" as any work Mozart was doing at the time (1779), with some wonderfully detailed writing for flutes and oboes as well as the odd instrument from which its name is derived. London-at-its-best is the phrase for the recording.
Strauss: "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme." Richard Strauss conducting the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. Decca DL 9576, $5.85. Strauss: "Symphonia Domestica." Richard Strauss conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. Vox PL 7220, $5.95.	Neither of these is quite what one had in mind in calling for further examples of the interpretative art of Strauss vis-à-vis composer Strauss. However, the "Domestica" is decidedly more listenable than the frayed, dull-sounding "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," admirable though some details of the latter are. Presumably the "Domestica" represents an early experiment with tape (at a concert performance of 1944). It tells us a good deal about his tempos, phrasing, etc., in this work. However, one suspects that echo chambers and filters have been employed liberally, for the sound profile is odd and variable, some of it quite well defined, other sections vague and blurry.
Strauss: Concerto for Violin (Opus 8). Siegfried Borries, violin, with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. Urania URLP 7032, $5.95.	When, or where, this work was last played, I have no idea—it is wholly new to me, though nearly eighty years old. Plainly Brahms-influenced, it nevertheless has abundant traces of the man to come in the youth of seventeen. Certainly it would be a welcome variant from endless repetitions of Bruch and Glazounov. Borries is an excellent man for it, Rother a qualified conductor. Overside is the late Oboe Concerto, with Erich Ertel as soloist. Both are well reproduced, though with a little wire in the string tone. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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REVIEWS

(*Continued from page 51*)

chanics can be deceptive where matters of size and volume of sound are concerned. But it is admirably malleable in quality, used with the livest kind of dexterity and finesse. Actually, the concurrent issues of the Boccherini (Janigro uses the same text as Casals) show just how much the thirty-four-year-old Italian has been influenced by the seventy-odd-year-old Catalan. If his very Casalsish playing lacks the ultimate refinement of the master, it is a subtler kind of cello playing than could be accomplished today by anyone known to me, including the model himself. Both it and the much lesser Haydn concerto are deftly accompanied by the Prohaska-led ensemble; both works are fully live and beautifully balanced reproductions.

Such words cannot be applied to the Casals restoration, which has the faded patina of an old master, but is nevertheless worth examining at close quarters for the values it contains. Every accent and bow stroke has its purposeful place in the plan, no less in Bruch than in Boccherini. Feuermann's Bloch is noble in concept, elo-

quent in articulation, and—thanks to its status of yesterday as one of the greatest of Philadelphia Orchestra recordings of the Thirties—still a very respectable one today.

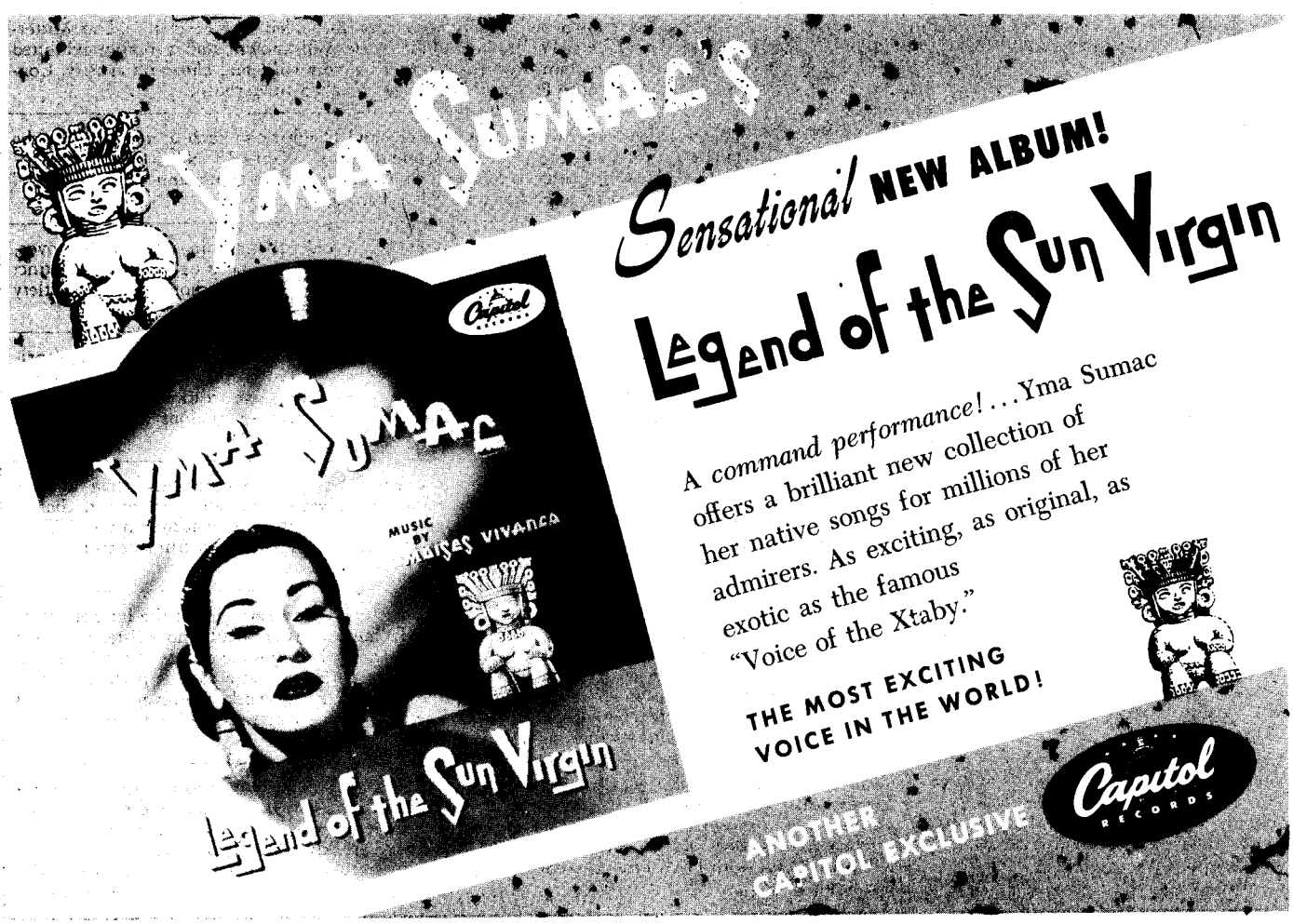
Live but Limited "Otello"

VERDI: *"Otello" (excerpts). Ramon Vinay, tenor, Eleanor Steber, soprano, and Frank Guarrera, baritone, with Fausto Cleva conducting.* (Columbia LP 4499, $5.45.)

ONE'S tendency to scold Columbia for not going whole-hog with "Otello"—even as they neglected to do with the Welitch-Reiner "Salome" a few years ago—is but intensified by the quality of as much as they have issued. As New Yorkers know, Vinay is vastly improved over previous years as Otello, Steber is a remarkably satisfying Desdemona, and Guarrera's dark, pliant voice sounds better on this disc than it has in any live or recorded performance save his Guglielmo in "Cosi." Lacking the powerful presence of Warren, he nevertheless acquits himself well enough to round out a suitable cast for a full-length treatment.

What we have, however, are the customary solo excerpts, without minor characters or ensembles—the Love Duet, Iago's "Credo," the duet of Otello and Iago, Otello's solo scene in Act III, "Salce, Salce," and the "Ave Maria," ending with the strangling of Desdemona. In all of these Vinay sounds even better than in the opera house, for the microphone relieves him of some vocal strain, while enhancing the vibrance in his tones. As well, it conveys the force and intensity of his conception with amazingly pictorial suggestion. Steber sings beautifully throughout, as does Guarrera, and Cleva provides apt assistance at all times. With the recording splendidly handled (save in the climax of the second-act duet, where it tends to scramble the men's voices), it is fine as far as it goes—which isn't far enough.

—IRVING KOLODIN.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Familar Wine in Strange Bottles

PHILIP L. MILLER

THE little Bach anthology under consideration here might be used as evidence by those who would justify the practice of transcription. Unfamiliar as the listings of the records may appear, there is scarcely a piece presented that is not well known in another form. Bach, it would seem, was never above reworking his compositions for whatever new occasion might arise.

Thus, of the seven clavier concertos in Vol. 17 of the Bach Gesellschaft only the fourth is not known to stem from an earlier work, and the editor, Rust, is willing to believe this one also had an original now lost. Four of these concertos now make an appearance on records—No. 3 in D and No. 4 in A played and conducted by Kurt Rapf (Bach Guild BG 509, $5.95); No. 4, No. 5 in F minor, and No. 7 in G minor with Helma Elsner at the keyboard and Rolf Reinhardt on the podium (Vox PL 7260, $5.95). No. 3 will be immediately recognized by those who know Violin Concerto No. 2 in E; No. 4 is famous in its own right, vying with No. 1 in D minor for popular favor; No. 5 has for its second movement a version of the so-called Arioso, better known as the sinfonia to Cantata 156 ("Ich stehe mit einem Fuss im Grabe"); No. 7 is a reworking of the Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor. Both discs under consideration are properly done with harpsichord and string orchestra, and both have solid musical merits. The duplication of Concerto No. 4 is a help to the reviewer if not to the sales, for it renders the matter of comparison fairly simple. This is a brilliant and exhilarating work, and there is more of brilliance and exhilaration in Rapf's playing of the first movement. Miss Elsner (or Mr. Reinhardt) favors more deliberate tempos. The Larghetto has more of the feeling of its Siciliana rhythm as Rapf conceives it, but he allows himself rather too much freedom as the movement progresses; at times his conducting hand hardly seems to know what his keyboard hand is doing. In the final Allegro there is less to choose. Both are well recorded, though both run the risk of being played at the top of the controls (harpsichord records nearly always need to be tuned down). The Vox version is a little less brilliant and somewhat better balanced, though the Bach Guild is not far behind.

The familiarity of two cantatas newly recorded is of a less subtle nature, both being based upon celebrated chorale melodies. Cantata No. 4, "Christ lag in Todesbanden" (Decca DL 7523, $3.85), owes its inspiration to one of the world's great Easter hymns, a melody which also called forth one of Bach's loveliest chorale preludes. Cantata No. 80, "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" (Bach Guild BG 508, $5.95), is, of course, the very head and cornerstone of Protestant music. No. 4 is not new to records; Robert Shaw gave it a more sonorous reading some years ago which is now available on LP (RCA Victor LM 25). If the new version, by the Göttingen Bach Festival chorus conducted by Fritz Lehmann, is a bit weak in the bass it has clarity and a good spirit to compensate. On the evidence of my ears, I take the sopranos to be boys, which is to the good. And one big advantage of the Fritz Lehmann performance is the use of solo voices where Shaw had his entire tenor and bass sections sing. The tenor Helmut Krebs sings his bold aria "Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn" with real conviction, but there is more appeal in the smooth vocalism of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, who, incidentally, has been winning plaudits abroad for his new lieder recordings. He is, however, limited in range, and he is not above rewriting Bach's lines to suit his own convenience. Not only the low E's but one of the high ones is altered. Aside from the weakness noted in the sheer body of tone, there is some fading in the course of the first movement and an occasional lack of clarity in the higher voices.

CANTATA No. 80 is a triumphant work, beginning as it does without introduction, the tenors proclaiming in unison with the violas an elaboration of the mighty tune, the trumpets responding with a flourish. Throughout the eight movements the air of confidence is never absent, the jubilation hardly ever relaxed. "In the union of contrapuntal skill with depth of feeling the first chorus stands at the head of Bach's chorales," says Schering. And the unison movement beginning "Und wenn die Welt voll

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Teufel wär" is surely one of the master's most stirring inspirations. Outstanding among the soloists in the Bach Guild recording conducted by Felix Prohaska are the bass Walter Berry and the trumpeter Helmut Wobitsch. Maja Weis-Osborn, the soprano, also comes through well, but the alto Hilde Rossl-Majdan and the tenor Kurt Equiluz are unfairly treated by too-close recording. That there is not a great deal of light and shade in the choral parts is in the nature of the music; the whole is impressively sonorous, with a fine organ bass.

With four cantatas performed by a group in Stuttgart under Hans Grischkat's direction (Renaissance X 34 and X 37, $5.95 each) we are on less-traveled ground. Cantata No. 6, "Bleib' bei uns, denn es will Abend werden"; No. 19, "Eserhüb sich ein Streit"; and No. 9, "Es ist das Heil uns kommen her" will come as complete novelties to most listeners, though they are full of beauties. No. 137, "Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren," however, is built on a famous chorale; indeed, the cantata is actually a set of variations on the fine old tune. The recording engineers have attempted to solve the problem of balance apparently by placing the chorus behind the orchestra, with generally good effect, though the choral tone sounds a little blunt. The soloists, more forward, are for the most part satisfactory, though the tenor Claus Stemann, to whom fall some of the finest moments, does not sound very impressive.

The two "Notenbücher" of Anna Magdalena Bach comprise forty-six pieces (not all by Bach) mostly for clavier, but including solo songs and four-part chorales. A selection of nineteen of these is offered by the same Mr. Rapf and Miss Weis-Osborn already mentioned (Bach Guild BG 510, $5.95). Here again we meet old friends, not only among the little minuets, marches, etc., but in such perennials as the first prelude from the "Well-tempered Clavier" and two movements of the cantata "Ich habe genug." The florid melody of "Willst du dein Herz mir schenken" benefits by the soprano's nicely poised singing, and "Bist du bei mir" is likewise tastefully presented. Mr. Rapf's playing is a little prim and careful.

As a supplement to all this music of the father we have three sonatas by son Johann Christian Bach played by the pianist Margaret Tolson (WCFM LP 7, $5.95)—No. 5 in E and No. 6 in C minor from Op. 5, No. 6 in B flat from Op. 17. The grace and charm of the more rapid movements come through in this well-recorded performance; the slow movements are rather unimaginative.

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In the next Recording's Issue—April 26

"The Lyric Techniques of Cole Porter"

by Fred Lounsberry

Articles by Martin Cooper and Rene Dumesnil

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Festival Forecast—European

When	*Where*	*Who*	*What*
April 30-June 1	Paris	Charles Munch, Pierre Monteux, Igor Stravinsky, etc.; Boston Symphony Orchestra; N. Y. City Ballet; Covent Garden, Vienna, & Paris opera companies.	Congress for Cultural Freedom sponsoring music, ballet, opera, etc., by artists of the free world.
May 6-June 22	Florence	Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leopold Stokowski directing symphony concerts. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni in "Guglielmo Tell."	Rossini operas, also Gluck's "Armide" and premiere of Vito Frazzi's "Don Chisciotte."
May 17-June 8	Vienna	Karl Böhm, Clemens Krauss, Herbert von Karajan, Bruno Walter, etc.	Operas and concert programs, including performances in historic surroundings.
June 5-July 4	Hague, Scheveningen (Holland)	Eduard van Beinum, Otto Klemperer, Rafael Kubelik, Josef Krips, Bruno Walter conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra; also Netherlands Opera and N. Y. City Ballet.	Symphony orchestra literature. Observance of Igor Stravinsky's seventieth birthday. Krips will direct Mozart's "Don Giovanni."
June 15-June 29	Prades (France)	Pablo Casals and group of chamber-music players.	Music of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, with Bach program at beginning and end.
June 11-July 31	Aix-en-Provence (France)	Hans Rosbaud and others conducting operas and orchestral concerts.	Repertory includes Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and "Figaro," Gluck's "Iphigenie en Tauride."
July 19-August 17	Munich	Bavarian State Opera Company.	Works of Mozart, Richard Strauss, and Pfitzner.
July 23-August 25	Bayreuth	Hans Knappertsbusch, Herbert von Karajan, and Joseph Keilberth conducting international casts.	Wagner's "Ring," "Parsifal," "Tristan," and "Meistersinger."
July 26-August 25	Salzburg	Karl Böhm, Clemens Krauss, Bruno Walter, and Herbert von Karajan in repertoire of operas and symphony concerts.	Verdi's "Otello," Mozart's "Figaro" and "Magic Flute," Donizetti's "Don Pasquale," and premiere of Strauss's "Danäe."
August 9-August 31	Lucerne	Concerts conducted by Sir John Barbirolli, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Herbert von Karajan, André Cluytens, and Eugene Ormandy.	Symphonic repertory with soloists. On August 21, Kirsten Flagstad appears with Furtwängler in "final" farewell.
August 17-September 6	Edinburgh	Hamburg Opera conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt and Joseph Keilberth. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham and Ernest Ansermet. Chamber music by Festival Quartet (Curzon, Szigeti, Fournier, Primrose).	Survey of German opera from "Magic Flute" to "Rosenkavalier" Orchestral concerts, chamber-music programs, and solo recitals.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Next month's RECORDINGS will include a "Festival Forecast—U. S." covering the summer months. Before the next issue appears, however, two domestic events worth noting will take place. Tucson Festival—April 13 (Easter Sunday)-April 26; Tucson, Arizona. Opening program, devoted to works of Arizona composers, includes première of Camil van Hulse's "Beatitudes." Daily concerts, exhibitions, pageants, etc., thereafter through Tuesday, April 22. Final events: a dance program directed by Jose Limon (April 25) and a concert by the Phoenix Symphony, Robert Lawrence conducting, with Grant Johanessen, pianist (April 26). Columbia University Festival of Contemporary American Music—April 26 and 27; New York City. All programs will be broadcast by the CBS network, beginning with a chamber-music concert on Saturday, April 26, at 5 P.M. E. Power Biggs will play a program of organ music at 9:30 Sunday morning, April 27, and the festival—Columbia's seventh—will conclude with a program of orchestral works directed by Leopold Stokowski at 3 P.M.

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A TEN YEAR PLAN

(*Continued from page 44*)

despite rather fully revealed shortcomings. As plainly, the conducting staff would benefit by an addition or additions to a wholly capable but by no means unimprovable group.

What one would like to see—as long as we are discussing millennia—is an improvement in the day-to-day casting that would bring every performance to the level of the revivals and new productions. Even the latter have shown an occasional instance of optimism prevailing over sound judgment. If one accepts as a level of taste the casting of last year's "Don Carlo" or this year's "Rigoletto" and "Cosi," one can only hold that lapses in "Aida," for example, or "Carmen" do not give us what we expect.

Neither does a succession of six Musettas in "Bohème" (including Munsel, Welitch, Gueden, and Lewis) consort readily with claims to ensemble opera, nor Baccaloni's Gianni Schicchi or Schoeffler's High Priest in "Alcestis" with reasonable ideas about opera in English. Certainly a director who organizes "Cosi" with the most consistent enunciation of English we have heard from this stage knows as well as anyone the realities involved.

To be sure, the company was deprived for virtually the full season of Jussi Bjoerling's services, Robert Merrill was likewise inactive till recent weeks, and these visible misfortunes were doubtless multiplied by any number of others privately but not publicly known. But that is the opera director's lot. If a Nell Rankin does less well than anticipated, a Mildred Miller does better. Not everything jelled in "Aida," but "Elektra" will be long remembered.

The exigent and the expedient have not occurred with such depressing regularity as in some other recent seasons—though one act of "Rigoletto" I saw suggested that Jan Peerce and Alberto Erede had no agreement at all about tempos before they began. And where was Elena Nikolaidi when she was not singing Amneris? Was Elisabeth Hoengen's journey from Vienna really necessary?

What this merely proves is that running an opera house is not an exact science and never will be. All we ask is good will, an aptitude for the task, and a persistent striving to better the existing situation, no matter how much better it is now than it was recently. All these, I think, can be fairly said about Rudolf Bing after two seasons.

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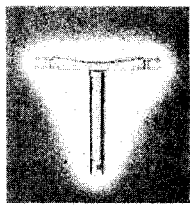

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

RUMOR has been a plentiful commodity in the gramophone industry during the past two years, and this has led to a state of mind where any piece of "inside information" regarding the release date for HMV's first LP's is usually discounted as yet another instance of wishful thinking. But the latest outbreak has been so persistent that a dateline in early autumn does appear likely, and the promised six-months notice should in that case not be far off; in fact an announcement may have been made by the time this is published.

The latest HMV releases tend to confirm the likelihood of an early announcement about LP. The list contains not a single work of any significant length save the memorial reissue of Schubert's "posthumous" A major Sonata, incomparably played by the late Artur Schnabel. Both this work and its companion in B flat, which reappeared a few months ago, are so well recorded that they might well be dubbed onto LP.

For those who like music with a sensuous but not too earthy Spanish flavor, the Hallé Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli has waxed Turina's "Danzas Fantásticas." These pieces are more fanciful than fantastic, but though their beauty is scarcely more than skin deep—what of Turina's music is?—they are most seductive, particularly "Ensueño" with its gently swaying 5/8 rhythm. The two discs were recorded in the rebuilt Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and are among the best Barbirolli and his players have given us. Late arrivals from the February list were Mozart's "Coronation" Concerto (in D, K.537) and Wagner's storm-tossed "Flying Dutchman" Overture. The concerto is far from being among the composer's finest—the late and lamented Alfred Einstein described it as "so completely easy to understand that even the nineteenth century grasped it without difficulty"—but it is a charming and amiable piece when played with style and finesse. Unfortunately, Gina Bachauer, the soloist with Alec Sherman and the New London Orchestra, plays it in a hard and efficient manner that destroys most of its appeal. The Wagner overture, on the other hand, is finely realized by the Vienna Philharmonic under Furtwängler. The conductor does not attempt to overdramatize the music, but builds it up carefully, with fine cumulative effect.

Columbia, too, has largely concentrated on short pieces with the exception of Francescatti's magnificent performance of Saint-Saëns' B minor Concerto and a splendid new set of "Till Eulenspiegel." In the latter, Karajan and the Philharmonia surpass all previous attempts to capture this perky and playful score on records, and Dennis Brain plays the important horn passages like a man inspired. What a great asset he is to any orchestra fortunate enough to secure his services! The recording is excellent and should be even better on microgroove. The same orchestra is also heard under the direction of the late Constant Lambert in an early work by Bartók, the "Portrait," Op. 5, No. 1, inspired by one of the composer's pupils who later became the wife of his friend and collaborator Kodály. This is lovely, passionate music in which the distinguished soloist is Joseph Szigeti, currently on one of his all-too-rare visits to this country; the somewhat aged recording is, unfortunately, none too good.

ONE does not usually associate Gieseking's name with the music of Schumann, so that it was something of a surprise to find that he had recorded "Kinderscenen." His performance is often very beautiful, but the two excellently recorded discs are marred by some rather mannered rubato and an absence of true simplicity. A disc that finds a singer completely in her element is Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's of Schumann's "Aufträge", and "Der Nussbaum"—a truly enchanting coupling, immaculately recorded.

Finally, on Parlophone there is a work that is most welcome for all its inappropriateness at the present moment—Vaughan Williams's "Thanksgiving for Victory," which was commissioned in 1945 by the BBC. This anthem for soprano, speaker, children's voices, chorus, organ, and orchestra may be occasional music, but it is entirely free from cheap effects, and its dignified sincerity admirably reflects the hopes and aspirations that were current in 1945. Boult is the sympathetic conductor, and the forces under his command include the Luton Choral Society and the London Philharmonic.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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Pop Roundup

THREE fascinating females lend distinction to the current crop of popular discs. Their contributions are only similar, however, in that all avoid grotesque distortions of melodic and lyric lines. Their interpretations expose all of the meaning of the lyrics and a good deal of the spirit of some truly wonderful songs.

One is Mary Martin, who is best described as "delightful." She is featured performer in a new disc version of Gershwin's score for GIRL CRAZY (COL ML 4475). With her presence, producer Goddard Lieberson has once again been able to synthetize the "first night" sparkle and flavor associated with the best original-cast productions. The score itself is one of Gershwin's finest, with such irrepressible hits as "I Got Rhythm," "Bidin' My Time," "Embraceable You," and such obscure gems as "Sam and Delilah," "Could You Use Me?," and "Treat Me Rough." It's the best buy in ages.

The appeal of Mabel Mercer is undoubtedly limited, but her fans constitute a near-fanatical cult. In her work they detect the world-weary, love-weary flavor of an American Lucienne Boyer. Truly, Miss Mercer has an electrical, if non-musical, way with a sophisticated lyric, which is to say, one that manages to be sad, self-analytical, and "smart" all at the same time. Her first album in about ten years is called SONGS BY MABEL MERCER, Volume I (ATLANTIC LP 402), and it may be your particular glass of demi-sec. Certainly it's good to hear a vocal version of Cole Porter's "Just One of Those Things."

There is, I believe, a general tendency to underrate the vocal talent of Lena Horne. Perhaps this particular talent has been overshadowed by her other endowments. At any rate, she is a warm, sensuous, honest performer who makes one feel that the composer had her in mind when he wrote "Can't Help Lovin' That Man" (Kern-Hammerstein), "The Lady Is a Tramp" (Rodgers-Hart), or "I've Got the World on a String" (Arlen-Koehler). These are all included, and "'Deed I Do," as she does it, is our favorite in LENA HORNE SINGS (M-G-M E-545).

Dance Discs

Two or three years ago, RCA Victor helped establish its 45-rpm system in the pop field by means of a series of albums entitled Designed for Dancing. Each of the bands on the label devoted six sides to songs by a single composer. Among the eighteen or so sets produced were some of the best dance numbers on wax. Now that the companies once again emphasize vocal discs, the shortage of danceable discs could become acute. But RCA has rushed to the rescue, this time making the best of its dance collections available on LP. Among the most serviceable are the buoyant FRANKIE CARLE PLAYS FRANK LOESSER (RCA LPM 19) and FREDDY MARTIN PLAYS JEROME KERN (RCA PM 14). In the special classifications, we have SPIKE JONES PLAYS THE CHARLESTON (RCA LPM 18) and PEREZ PRADO PLAYS MUCHO MAMBO (RCA LPM 21). The latter makes exciting listening. Best of the lot is a masterful program by a perennial favorite, TOMMY DORSEY PLAYS COLE PORTER (LPM 22). It features interesting arrangements of great tunes. —BILL SIMON.

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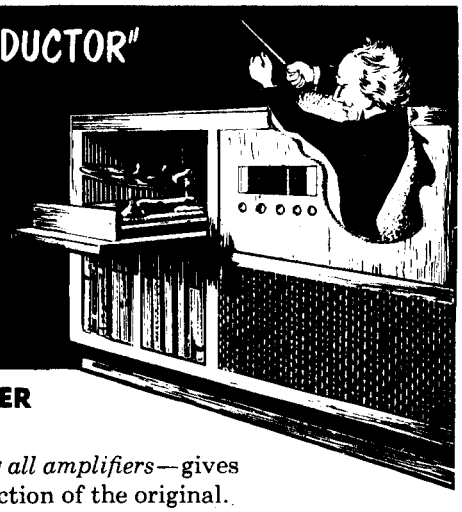

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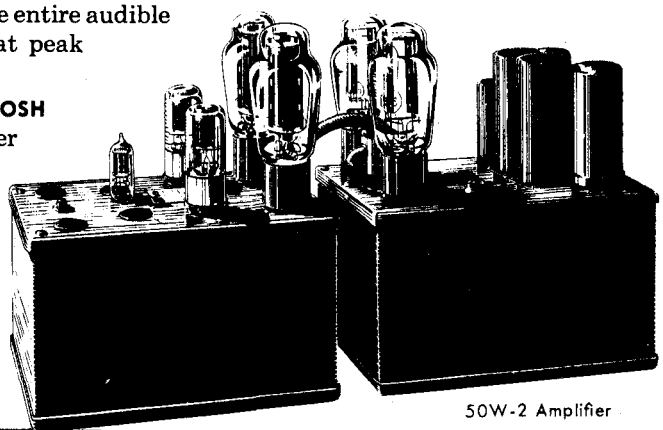

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Economy "Rigoletto," Luxury "Vestale"

LOOKING back to the day when the quartet from "Rigoletto" as performed by an ensemble headed by Caruso cost $4, it must be considered a matter of historic importance that any version of the *complete* opera could be produced to sell for but a few dollars more. Actually, what is offered by Remington in its RLP 199, at a list price of $6.57, is a good deal more than "any version"; it is an effort both conscientious and thoroughgoing which comes much closer to the Metropolitan standard, as represented by the RCA Victor Peerce-Berger-Warren set than, say, a San Carlo production embodying a similar price ratio.

As those who have learned their operatic lessons in New York are well aware, Ivan Petroff is a Rigoletto of stature and persuasive voice who has never emerged from the operatic minor leagues to the majors in this country. Whether this has to do with an uncertain instrument which sometimes gave him trouble, I don't know; but he is in splendid voice throughout this whole affair, and well worth the listening. Gino Sarri is a true *tenore grazioso*, who gives a lightness and lilt to the Duke's music rarely heard at the Metropolitan recently (Bruno Landi was perhaps the last, though much too light for the house), and he favors original keys with top C's in the show pieces. Orlandina Orlandini is an erratic Gilda full of confidence above the staff, often wavery below, but able to provide, in "Tutte le feste," a real dramatic quality. Save for Mario Frosini, an excellent Sparafucile, the small parts are badly sung, the Maddalena (Lidia Melani) rather pitifully so.

Ivan Petroff — "a Rigoletto of stature."

Altogether, however, Erasmo Ghiglia, the conductor, has put together a decidedly listenable "Rigoletto" out of his principals and the big instrumental ensemble described as the Maggio Fiorentino Orchestra. It is not only possessed of substantial musical virtue—plus some lamentable *gaffes*—but also a good deal of potent dramatic impact. As for the recording, with its spacious acoustical background, it is good enough to invite comparison with the RCA standard noted above—which is flattery, to Remington, of a Woolworth-Tiffany sort. This showed Ghiglia's instrumentalists to be rather worn and thread bare beside the plushy RCA Victor orchestra, the whole sound panorama paler, lacking in comparable details of shading. But $6.57 is a good deal less than $17 plus, and Remington RLP 199 is worth every penny asked.

Likewise, with another emphasis is the Cetra-Soria "Vestale" (Cetra Soria set 1224), for which the pennies asked are $17.95. Allusion above to this as a "luxury" "Vestale" embodies the latent thought that any extended version of this remarkable, but slightly unsalable work, would be a luxury product. However, if Cetra-Soria can afford this indulgence, we can afford the extravagance of a few special adjectives, such as invaluable, illuminating, even inspiring.

Save for the eight occasions in the Metropolitan seasons from 1925 to 1927 when "La Vestale" was given with Rosa Ponselle and Ezio Pinza, both "Vestale" and its composer, Spontini, are unknown quantities in this country—which means that for most listeners of this era they are unknown quantities. This has nothing to do with musical merit, but rather with a fluctuation in public appreciation for a style of writing whose more flamboyant qualities were appropriated by Verdi in a manner more immediately warming. Nevertheless, the pure thing

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retains an affinity for Gluck (and Mozart) which the mesmerizing Merlin of Sant' Agatha discarded.

The part of it that emerges most tangibly from this recording is the responsibility of Fernando Previtali, whose conducting throughout is remarkably assertive, unifying, and flexible. Few of the solo singers have either the voices or the stylistic understanding to give him what he wants—the exceptions are mostly male, particularly Renato Gavarini (Licinio), Giuliano Ferrein (Pontifex Maximus), and Alfredo Fineschi (Cinna)—but the chorus of Radio Italiana sings beautifully and with a surprising amount of inflection, the orchestra plays well, and the niceties of recording are present in unexpected finesse where balance and proportion are concerned.

To be sure, none of the women (Maria Vitale shows a strong but insecure voice as Giulia, Elena Nicolai a quavery, unreliable one as the High Priestess) is vocally or artistically qualified for Spontini's classic line, his requirements in definition, amplitude, or mere accuracy, but Previtali's overriding impulse gives musical order to the occasional vocal chaos, a sense of purpose and direction to the whole of this eloquent work. Textually, the score is far from complete (thirty pages of ballet are omitted at the end of Act I, for example), but the predominant line of dramatic and musical development has been faithfully traced.

IN A much lighter mood and a much brighter key, Johann Strauss's "Nacht in Venedig" (Columbia set SL 119, $11.53) embodies a classicism of another sort on a more modest level—the classicism of "Fledermaus" and "Zigeunerbaron," diluted by a weaker book and a less intense melodic invention. However, it has its substantial charms and—in this performance derived from the Bregenz Festivals—the superlative tenor voice of Karl Friedrich. As the Duke of Urbino, who has many of the most expensive melodies to sing, Friedrich amplifies the impression of his London discs (alone and with Hilde Gueden) that the mantle of Richard Tauber fits him more snugly than it does any other tenor of the sort now active. Alfred Jerger, of more than modest fame, sings the smallish part of Delacqua, with Esther Rethy as Annina. The ensemble is well directed by Anton Paulik, and the recording is superior to the average casual tape operation. Strauss fanciers will want it, in any case; others will find Friedrich a rewarding acquaintance.

—THE EDITOR.

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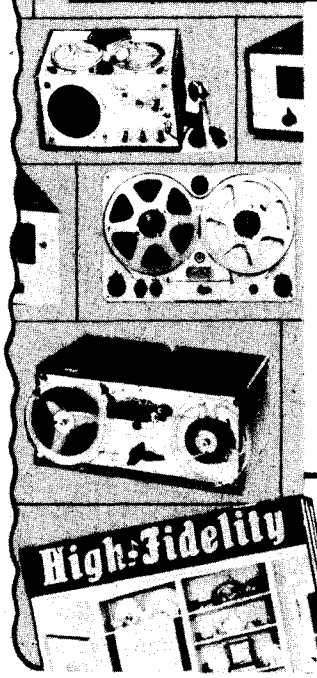

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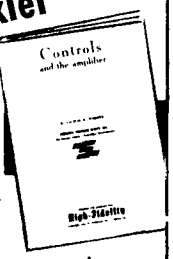

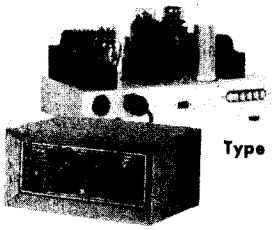

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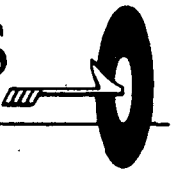

I HAVE received three Atlantic LP's of piano music by leaders of "modern jazz"—that general area which includes the dialects described as "be-bop" and "progressive" and "cool" music. All of these words have to do with jazz's recent adaption, in its own highly syncopated field, of devices associated with modern music at large: the elaborate use of augmented chords and passing tones, the eccentric development of the percussion section, a persistent drift toward polytonality or atonality. Along with this there has naturally been a premium on brilliant individual technique.

It is evident in the two ladies and one gentleman under discussion. Mary Lou Williams (Atlantic LP 114, $3.) is a distinguished veteran of many years of jazz arranging and piano playing. A notably powerful orchestrater for Andy Kirk and His Clouds of Joy, between 1929 and 1942, she went on to write scores for Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington, and recent years have seen her moving steadily into deeper "be-bop" (or "progressive" if you prefer), with never any idea of letting last year's interests represent the last word.

Always an urgent, propulsive pianist, she has become more and more experimental. As with many other modern jazz players, I personally find her dissonantal harmonic *impasto* a little too unrelievedly thick for my taste; in recent works she has sometimes seemed not only "cool" but also rather cloying. She is, however, invariably interesting, and on this record there is a charming "Mary's Waltz" which might have come from some more ornate admirer and pal of Erik Satie's. Her other selections are "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," "Pagliacci," "Opus 2," "From This Moment On," " S' Wonderful," "You're the Cream in My Coffee," and "In the Purple Grotto."

Billy Taylor (Atlantic LP 113, $3.) is another remarkable technician, holding a formal Bachelorhood of Music from Virginia State College, and informal gauds and honors as a former pianist for "Dizzy" Gillespie and Machito's pungent Afro-Cubans. Here there is a great deal to listen to, and my chief complaint is not with cooling or cloying so much as with a persistent lushness which I wish would dry out from time to time. Like his idolized Art Tatum, Taylor is a pianist who does not seem to entertain much admiration for the musical rest, for, in short, the uses of silence. He plays what are for me altogether too sleek, well-lubricated, ornamental versions of "Willow Weep for Me," "The Very Thought of You," "Somebody Loves Me," "Good Groove," "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams," "What Is There to Say?," "If I Had You," and "Thou Swell."

MY favorite of the three pianists is Barbara Carroll (Atlantic LP 132, $3.) who has the sparing quality I miss in Mary Lou Williams and Billy Taylor, albeit Carroll is a busy pianist as old-fashioned chording professors go and has any amount of animated, elegance. Working out of Worcester, Mass., via the New England Conservatory of Music, she brings a supple modern vocabulary to jazz playing and an over-all shaping of the chorus, or set of choruses, which seems to me quite unusual. I have the feeling that in the recent preoccupation with thickly augmented harmonies, many jazz players' minds have been dominantly vertical and that the horizontal virtues are in constant danger of getting lost. But not in Barbara Carroll's hands. With great deftness and swank, she performs "Taking a Chance on Love," "Tis Autumn," "They Can't Take That Away from Me," "The Lady's in Love with You," "You Took Advantage of Me," "Autumn in New York," "Love of My Life," and "My Funny Valentine."

A fine quartet of Dixieland numbers appears from the California front —Bob Scobey's Frisco Band playing "Wolverine Blues" and "Coney Island Washboard" (Good Time Jazz No. 49, 89c) and "Beale Street Mamma" and "That's a Plenty" (Good Time Jazz No. 50, 89c). Scobey has been well known as the trumpeter for Turk Murphy's brass-bound little combination, and here, with some of the same men plus the splendid clarinetest Albert Nicholas, he gives a superbly breezy account of his materials. Formal musical experiment is as conspicuously absent here as it is obvious in the pianists under previous consideration, but there are many old school nuances and all the vigor one could want.

—WILDER HOBSON.

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The Binaural Increment

READERS who attended the Audio Fair in New York last fall or the IRE (Institute of Radio Engineers) show this March, or who can be in Chicago for its first Audio Fair this spring, May 23-24, will be among the few so far initiated into a basic new way of recording that will have a large influence on music lovers as soon as it is reduced to practical dimensions for the home—which may be within the year. Binaural recording, now introduced commercially by Magnecord, Inc., makes a practicality, if a working compromise, out of a principle discussed in this department in September 1947—two-eared recording. The Binaural Magnecorder, a complete portable system for making two simultaneous recordings on one tape, one for each ear, is now on the market and the chances that a binaural tape library will be forthcoming are excellent.

To be sure, this preliminary development is not for the slim purse. The recorder is for the affluent (about $900) or, more practically, for schools and institutions of many sorts who can use it not only to record music, but for a host of new analytical uses in music study and in such unmusical matters as conference recordings where three of four people talking heatedly at once can be understood separately via binaural recording; also for an assortment of special industrial uses. However, Magnecord is going all-out for music now, and it is this column's firm conviction that with the proper tying-in of a number of recent developments in low-cost ' quality sound reproduction binaural music can soon be in the homes of those who can afford a middle-priced tape machine in the $400 class, eventually going lower when cheaper dual-track machines are converted to binaural sound.

What is binaural music? We hear "live" music with two ears, as we see the players with two eyes, each ear and each eye receiving its own special message. Flat photographs are one-eyed—taken through a single camera. Normal records are one-eared. The stereo photograph is double, one picture for each eye, the two blended for three-dimensioned sight; the binaural recording is also double, two separate recordings picked up by two mikes ears-apart and fed through separate systems to dual tracks locked together on a single tape. (So far double recording is impractical on disc but obviously simple on the two-track tape machine now so common.) When one of these tracks is played, separately, into the ear via earphones, and when the recording is rightly done, we have a species of reproduction that is just plain incredible. The phones are not there—we hear "through" them and find ourselves surrounded by actual music, life-size. We can point to instruments in various directions, though this, I must emphasize, is *not* of importance in binaural music. Principally, we get a tremendous sense of immediate presence and depth of perspective that easily matches the striking effect of a good stereo picture.

Earphones are a nuisance. Why not speakers? Theoretically it won't work; the recordings are mixed and both ears hear both speakers, spoiling the binaural effect. But in practice Magnecord's experiments have shown what this writer has long suspected, that even a partial binaural effect can do wonders for music. If two speakers are set in two room corners, so that your left ear hears the left hand one loudest and the right ear the right hand one, there is a binaural effect of sorts, perhaps 30 per cent. Even so, it works. Naturally (as some may be thinking) the realism is helped along by the mere fact of two speakers in two corners that always works.; But "AB" tests I have already heard (Magnecord will demonstrate for you) show convincingly that one recording played through two speakers is *not* the same as two recordings, one for each.

The audible gain here in musical realism might be called the Binaural Increment. With a wrongly miked binaural recording the Increment is virtually nil. The second track contributes little. But under optimum conditions (and we are far from sure yet what they are) the Increment is truly wonderful. If you get to hear the binaural demonstration, ask for the tape of a high-school choir singing spirituals. You won't soon forget it! Others may not be so good.

This avid experimenter has just received a binaural machine from the company and plans to plaster a large amount of tape with two-eared music to see what's what. Rumor tells already of planned trips to Europe with binaural equipment, to initiate a permanent binaural library of music on tape. A lot of experimenting is still to be done, as usual, but here is a basic new advance in musical potential over and above all that we have today.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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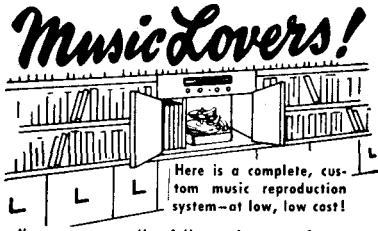

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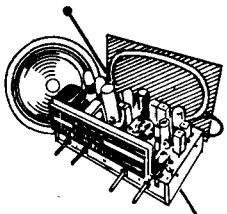

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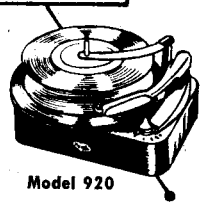

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FRITZ STIEDRY

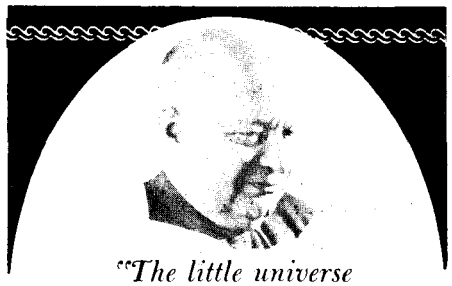
(*Continued from page 47*)

aration, Stiedry conducted the first performance since the Revolution of Bach's "Passion According to St. John," in a new Russian version by Alexis Tolstoy, with the collaboration of the venerable (and formerly Imperial) Chapel Choir. The dutiful functionaries of the anti-God propaganda permitted this "opium" to be administered to "the people" four successive times. They shut down on further repetitions only because of the "dangerous" proximity of Easter!

At no time was Stiedry asked to declare his political convictions, nor was he ever required to conduct the "Internationale," which was religiously played before every concert or performance. But in 1936 he became a rather close observer of the lamentable Shostakovich affair—the first ominous hint of what was to come. The story is well known: how Stalin was persuaded to attend the Moscow performance of the successful but daring opera "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk," and after a certain scene left the theatre ostentatiously, in aural agony or moral indignation, or both. Whereupon the critics discovered that Shostakovich was guilty of "bourgeois formalism" and "Western decadence," which henceforth became the deadly sins of creative art in Russia.

Stiedry was at this time rehearsing the first two movements of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, while the composer was still at work on the last movement. When he brought it, it was found to contain tonal insults and offensive noises intended to be an answer to the party-line critics. The orchestra sensed danger, and Shostakovich asked whether he should withdraw the score, though Stiedry refused to become involved in what he considered a non-musical matter. (The score was withdrawn.) This was as near as he ever came to being drawn into politics, but it was enough to show that the end of his usefulness was approaching. Nevertheless his friendship for Shostakovich endured until the day, some ten years later, when the "repentant" and "re-educated" composer made that pitiful appearance at the Waldorf-Astoria, mouthing the Kremlin-dictated phrases in praise of "democracy" and "peace." Stiedry sent him a personal greeting, but he was not surprised when he received no reply.

Stiedry's last Russian season ended in the spring of 1937, some months after the great purges had begun to



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take their toll. His contract was renewed as usual, although by this time it was whispered in certain circles that he was a spy. Fritz Stiedry left for his usual Alpine holiday, never to return.

In 1938, about the time that Dr. Kurt Schuschnigg was occupying a hot seat in the Führer's eyrie at Berchtesgaden, Dr. Fritz Stiedry arrived in free America, bereft of nearly all his earthly goods but still clinging firmly to his precious Complete Editions of Mozart and Bach. This was lucky, because some months later the New Friends of Music were persuaded by Artur Schnabel that they needed a chamber orchestra with Stiedry to conduct it. For four seasons thereafter Stiedry provided the Town Hall customers with unusual and delectable musical fare consisting for the most part of early and seldom-performed Mozart, six of the "lost" but recently rediscovered symphonies of Haydn, and the three triple concertos of Bach. There was also a deeply moving performance of Bach's "Art of Fugue" in Stiedry's own instrumental setting, and such modern works as Schoenberg's second Chamber Symphony and "Pierrot Lunaire" (which incidentally I first heard him conduct in Berlin in 1923, with Artur Schnabel at the piano, Boris Kroyt playing the violin, and an obscure young Russian refugee named Piatigorsky the cello).

It is worth noting that in spite of his classical predisposition Stiedry has probably performed as much contemporary music as any conductor alive. As a lifelong friend of Schoenberg, Schnabel, and Krenek he is as much at home with the atonalists as he is with Beethoven, Bruckner, and Strauss. He refuses to regard such conventional labels as "classic," "romantic," or "modern" as a guide to style. He links Beethoven with Wagner rather than with Mozart, and has discovered an inner affinity between Schubert and Verdi. And he performs them accordingly. This accounts for the unusually flowing continuity and the meticulous delineation he gives to a score like the "Götterdämmerung." He abhors the fustian that passes for eloquence and the orchestral bombast that only drowns out the voices.

THE Met engaged Stiedry in 1946, as the second of the three Fritzes (the others being Reiner and Busch). With the advent of Bing he undertook the revival of his particular favorites, "Don Carlos" last year and this season "Cosi." All these works present particular problems of style and interpretation, a kind of esthetic exploration that is Stiedry's meat. No worthwhile opera can, according to him, be pro-

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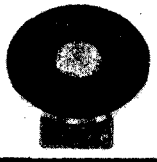

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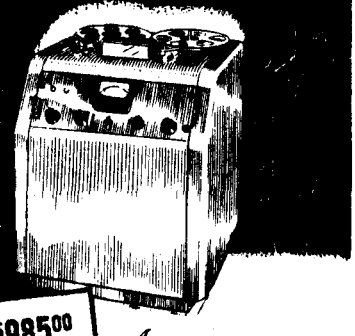

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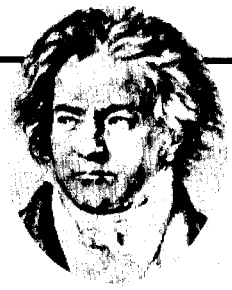
duced according to a general pattern or "school."

And that brings us back to where we started—the surprising success of "Cosi" at the Met. If you were to ask Stiedry, he would—after giving full credit to the producer—point to that great creative musician and psychologist, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, as a man who always rose above the silly plots of librettists to produce a musico-dramatic masterpiece. The real reason for the long list of failures of "Cosi," and the abortive tinkering with an "insoluble" problem, is that the problem was already solved by the composer. "There is," says Stiedry, "a curious but intentional discrepancy between the plot and the music of this opera." It would be wrong to perform the most heavenly and deeply-felt music that Mozart ever wrote (in the arias and ensembles) as though it were conceived in the farcical spirit of the plot. For instance, in the quintet where the two pairs of lovers take leave of each other (although the men know that in a few minutes they will return in a ridiculous disguise, Mozart rises above the "superficial reality") of the situation and expresses the "essential truth" and the emotions of a lovers' farewell. In other words, Mozart here becomes what we would now term a "surrealist." It is interesting that Alfred Lunt agrees with this interpretation, for he immediately conceived it to be his "most important task" to "dramatize the unreality of certain happenings."

IT IS notorious that musicians regard Stiedry as a highbrow—which he undoubtedly is. It is true that he would as soon talk about music as perform it. He has an impressive knowledge of literature and a keen understanding of history in relation to art. His preoccupation with esthetic problems sometimes exceeds the realm of sociability. It is dangerous to argue with him about tempos, interpretation, or alternative versions, if any, for he is apt to floor you with facts and dates and quotations.

As a conductor he conceives himself to be simply the communicator of the music, nothing more or less. He is the master of subtle nuance rather than the overpowering effect. He employs purposely short-range movements and the least spectacular gestures. After all, conductors should be "heard" rather than seen. And he is obstinately unresponsive to suggestions which aim at louder applause. As Virgil Thomson once said: when Stiedry conducts, the conductor disappears and we have only the music.

And in the case of Mozart, that is enough.



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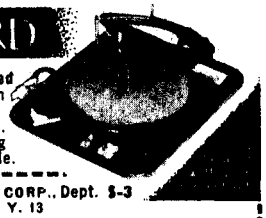

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Wool Over the Eyes?

SIR: Is RCA trying to pull the wool over the record buyer's eyes? After enjoying Maestro Toscanini's superb performance of the Beethoven Seventh on a collector's issue, I find that we are to have a newly recorded release of this work by the same maestro. Noting reissues of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies by Toscanini, I wonder if the same thing is going to happen. . . . Should we buy now or wait until RCA comes out with new recordings?

J. R. TURNER.

Omaha, Nebr.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *RCA's staff is too busy making silk purses out of sow's ears to bother with pulling the wool over anybody's eyes. In any case, it could not be anticipated months ago, when these projects were initiated, that Maestro Toscanini would put in the most prolific recording winter of his life in* 1951-52. *Moreover, there will be general agreement that these older interpretations have genuine historical importance, and are welcome whatever impends of contemporary date. As far as buying advice is concerned, the sound policy would seem to suggest waiting for the new projects to be issued before deciding which vintage years one prefers.*

Carl Seeman of Bremen

SIR: When Mr. Canby says [*SR* Feb. 16] that Fritz Lehmann must be responsible for the life and style of Decca DL 9568 as compared to so much "heavy Bavarian playing," he makes the reader believe that the soloist, Carl Seeman, is a Bavarian, or of the Bavarian school. The only thing Bavarian here is the orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic. Seeman was born (May 8, 1910) in Bremen, studied in the local *Gymnasium* and in Leipzig. . . .

ALEX P. HULL.

Charlottesville, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We are indebted to reader Hull for the above information, also for the further word that Seeman was an organist and professor of piano in Flensburg and Kiel before settling in Freiburg.*

Discophiles for Delius

SIR: I see where enough people have raised enough noise to get Columbia to repress on LP the Weingartner literature of Brahms and Beethoven. I wonder how much pressure could be put on Columbia to get Frederic Delius's music on LP's. Surely the Society Sets should lend themselves to such adaptation.

A. H. THORPE.

Atlantic, Ga.

SIR: Since you and your fine magazine seem to be able to bring attention to important omissions in the field of recorded music, may I present the case for Delius? Here is the one composer above all others whose fragile works need the nearly-perfect uninterrupted reproduction only LP can give. . . . Surely, we should be allowed LP recordings of "Paris," "Brigg Fair," "Appalachia," and the piano and violin concertos, if only in dubbed versions of the excellent Beecham Society Sets.

MANUEL TARSHISH.

White Plains, N. Y.

Swiss and Dutch

SIR: As a constant reader of *SR*, could you tell me what "Orchestre de la Suisse Romande" means? Also "Concertgebouw?"

RICHARD YATES.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The Swiss title means, merely, "Orchestra of French Switzerland," while the Dutch word refers to the concert hall—Concertgebouw—in Amsterdam where the orchestra plays.*

Verses and Tunes

SIR: Why do songs no longer have verses, not even a few lines? Even the old tunes that are revived from time to time are emasculated of all words save the chorus. Is it because the public mind no longer is capable of comprehending more than a repetitious sentence or two? Or is it because the vocal artists are too downright lazy to sing a song in its entirety?

E. SWIGERT.

Santa Monica, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Likely, it has more to do with that intangible factor called fashion, and the fact that the "Hit Parade" lure has made composers of such matter concerned only with a catchy refrain. Also, the arrangers have taken over the dressmaking for this type of garment, and like to work with what is most attractive—namely, the chorus. However, such albums as Columbia's "Band Wagon" and "Girl Crazy" (reviewed on page* 59) *remind us of the by-gone pride of the Schwartzes and Gershwins in such matters, and may prod their contemporaries to emulation.*

Points on Points

SIR: May the same point be used safely on 78's and LP's? And is there such a thing as a permanent point? Are any of the liquids or gadgets on the market for removal of static-electricity dust from record grooves necessary or worthwhile?

PETER HUDSON.

Bath, Me.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Two points are indispensable for use with 78's and LP's, for the simplest of reasons: the LP point is too fine for the 78 groove, the 78 point too wide for the LP. The only "permanent" point is the diamond, which has not—according to personal or expert testimony—given way since being introduced almost two years ago. As for liquids and gadgets, we have found our static electricity and dust problems cared for well enough by the use of a damp cloth prior to playing.*

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